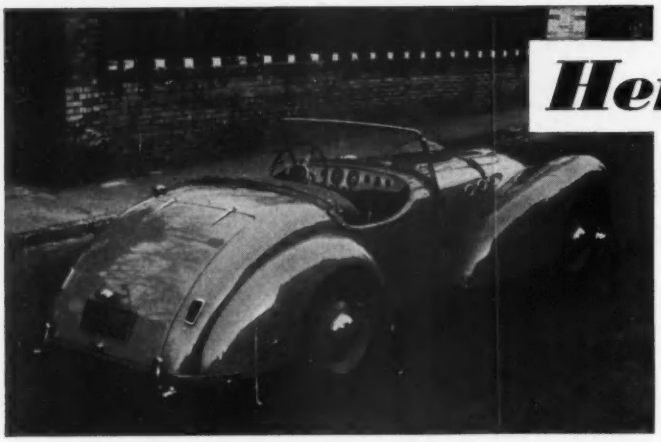
MOTOR TREND

LY 1950
CENTS

The Magazine for a Motoring World

• The Light Car—America's Automotive Future?



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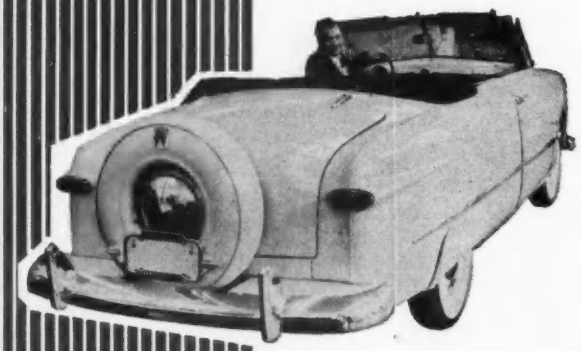

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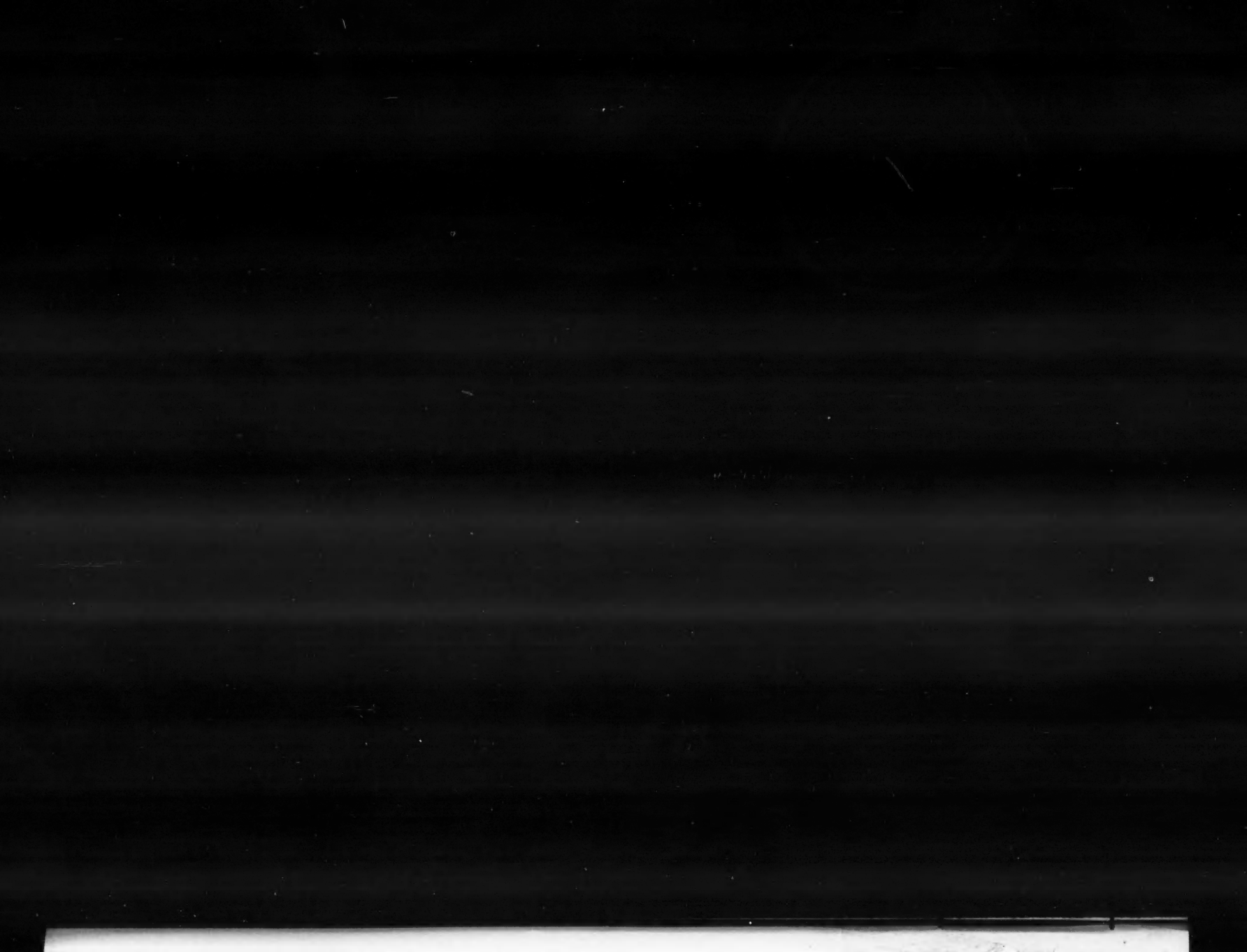

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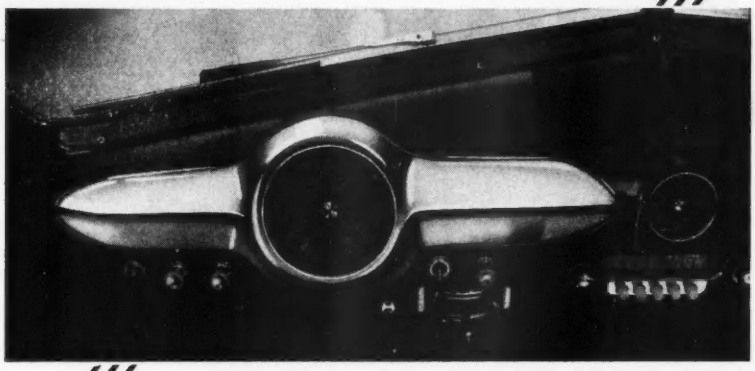

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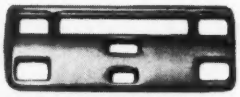

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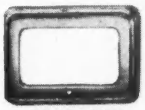

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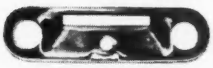

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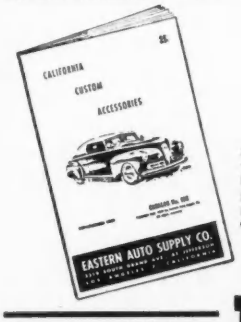

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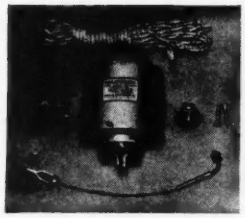

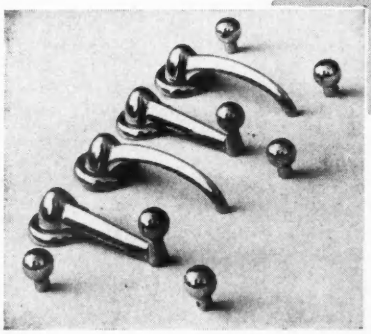

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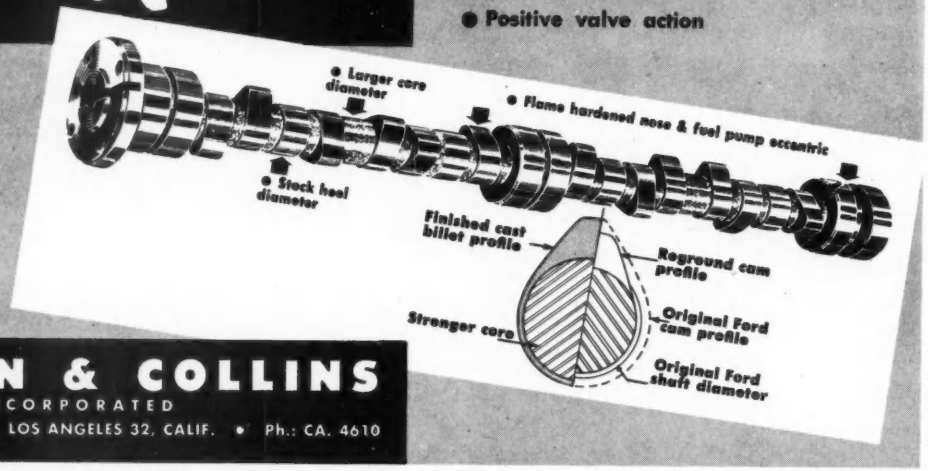

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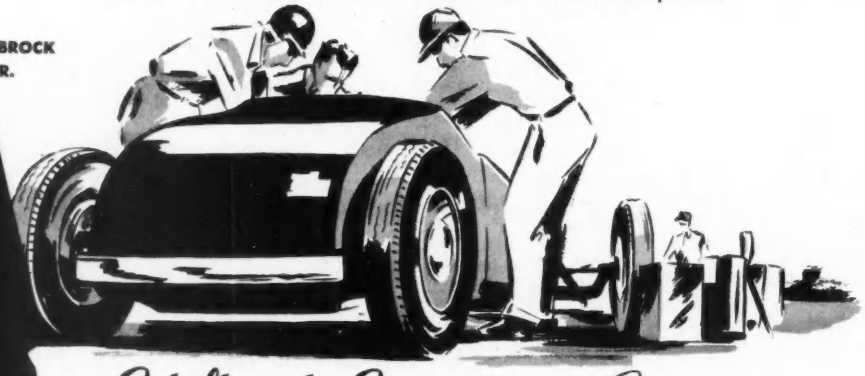

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Blueprint for the Future

by the Editor

IN A RECENT letter, one of our readers asked the question, "What is your editorial policy? What does MOTOR TREND stand for?" We believe that this is a good question —although we *thought* that the answer was obvious. If the magazine doesn't indicate to this one reader what our policy is, then maybe it needs to be clarified.

MOTOR TREND has three basic objectives: that of bringing the news of the automotive world (both figurative and literal) to the motoring public; that of analyzing new cars; and that of helping the reader to make better use of his car.

To be a reporter, we have to inform our readers of *what* is happening, *where* and *why*. The "what" and "where" are an objective reporting of the facts; the "why" is dictated by our interpretation of these facts.

Our analysis of new cars is mainly through the monthly "Motor Trials." By giving our viewpoints and criticisms, we hope to provide a standard by which readers can judge the relative merits of each new car.

To help the reader make better use of his car, from time to time we devote space to informative technical articles and discuss various design principles. Through these articles it is felt that the reader will be better prepared to operate his car confidently, capably and economically.

In addition to our main objectives, we have a cause to which we are devoted—the furthering of the motoring sport. It is our opinion that this has a definite place here, for who has less fun with his car than the American motorist?

The motoring sport does not necessarily have to have as prominent a place in our lives as it does with our British cousins, but we are of the opinion that the average sports fan (regardless of the sport) is a spectator instead of a participant, by necessity alone. Given the opportunity to enter the *right type* of event for *his* particular interests, he will gladly step out from the sidelines. This is as true of motoring as it is of baseball, hockey or golf.

We are resolved to further automotive sport of all kinds: from the road race to events like hill climbs, gymkhanas, rallies (reliability runs), and acceleration meets, in which either, or both, sports cars and stock cars could compete.

If you belong to, or know of, a club whose objective is the furthering of the automotive sport, let us hear from you. It is only through the proper type of publicity that the general public knows of the progress being made. And, regardless of whether you are a club member or not, as an individual motorist you will probably have many suggestions to offer.

The American motorist has long needed a spokesman. MOTOR TREND is prepared to be just that—a liaison agent between the motoring public and Detroit—truly "The Magazine for a Motoring World."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	PLACE
June 4-9	SAE Summer Meeting	French Lick, Indiana
June 10	SCCA Bridgehampton Sports Car Road Races	Bridgehampton, N.Y.
June 25	Santa Ana Road Race	Santa Ana, Calif.
June 26-30	ASTM Annual Meeting	Atlantic City, New Jersey
Aug. 7-19	International Trade Fair	Chicago, Illinois

MOTOR TREND

The Magazine for a Motoring World

JULY 1950 Published Monthly VOL. 2 • NO. 7

CONTENTS

BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE By the Editor—5
MEXICAN ROAD RACE —6
PROTOTYPE OF THE FUTURE—THE CORD By George Finneran—8
MOTOR TRIALS—OLDSMOBILE —10
A COLLECTOR'S COLLECTOR By Col. Alexis de Sakhnoffsky—12
POLAROID VS. SEALED BEAM By V. S. Logue—14
MG SPEED TUNING By Edward J. P. Cunningham—15
THE LIGHT CAR DISCOVERED AGAIN By Griffith Borgeson—16
LIGHT CARS OF THE FUTURE By Col. Alexis de Sakhnoffsky—18
CARAVAN OF CARRIAGES —20
FLAT FORD CUSTOM —21
SPOTLIGHT ON DETROIT —23
TENDANCE CONTINENTALE By A. Devereux—24
AIRPORT RACING AT SUFFOLK By John Bentley—28
TRADE TOPICS —30
LETTERS FROM OUR READERS —34

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COVER: Mutual admiration seems to be the order of the day, with Elmer H. Good admiring Miss Jean Dean, who evinces interest in Joe Urritta's Barris Kustom car. The car was originally a 1941 Ford two-door sedan and was restyled by Sam Barris at an estimated cost of around $3600. With the padded cloth top (which is removable) in position, vision is good in all directions. Car is 49 inches tall. Photograph by Thomas J. Medley.

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MEXICAN ROAD RACE

"BATTLE OF THE GIANTS"

DATA COURTESY GUILLERMO HAWLEY AND ROLAND GOODMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK MAN

PERHAPS the most misleading term in describing the Carrera Panamericana is "Road Race"; much more apt would be a title such as "Battle of the Giants," for in actuality it was a test of car and driver endurance—a mad dash along a winding road that stretches from border to border and over open prairies, steep hills, and mountainous passses. The race was marked by wind, heat, rain, blowouts and brake failures that all added up to spectacular spins and forced retirements from the race. An indication of the course's difficulty is that only 57 cars finished out of 126 starters.

After 2178 miles of tortuous driving, Hershel McGriff (1950 Oldsmobile) arrived at an otherwise sleepy town on the Guatemalan border, El Ocotal, to find that he had completed the distance in the fastest total elapsed time (27 hours 34:25). His average time for the entire route, which was divided into nine legs of varying distances, was 78 mph. His position was protested (but denied) by Tom Deal (1950 Cadillac), based on the failure of officials to allow Deal time credit for a delay due to a crackup. Credit for the three or four-minute delay would have given Deal first prize money of $17,381, instead of $11,570 for second.

McGriff credited his fast time for the race to the conventional transmission used in his Oldsmobile. On the last leg of the route (Tuxtla Gutierrez to El Ocotal), which was gravel-surfaced and muddy from recent downpours, he was able to maintain traction whereas Deal, in his 1950 Cadillac with Hydra-Matic, had difficulty in remaining on the road.

Third place was nabbed by Roy Pat Connor, who was driving a 1950 Nash. He was but 16 minutes and 10 seconds behind the leader. Connor was later disqualified for allowing Curtis Turner, noted dirt track driver, to ride with them on the last leg of the race. This moved Al Rogers (1949 Cadillac) into third place. First across the finish line at El Ocotal was Jean Trevoux (1950 Delahaye), three-time winner of the Monte Carlo Rally. His time, however, was 81 minutes behind the winner, giving him sixth place.

Of the total of 131 cars which were entered and 126 that started, only 57 finished. The breakdown of makes in the original total included six foreign cars and 125 American cars, most of which were 1949 and 1950 models. The six foreign cars were: Alfa-Romeo (2), Delahaye (1), Hotchkiss (1), Jaguar (1), Talbot (1). Surprisingly, from this small representative percentage, three foreign cars were in the first ten finishers, two being 1950 Alfa-Romeos and the other a 1950 Delahaye. The American entries were dominated by Cadillacs (22), Buick (17), Lincoln (16), Oldsmobile (14), Mercury (11), Ford (10), Hudson (9), Nash (8), Packard (7), Studebaker (4), Chrysler (2), Chevrolet (2), and DeSoto (1). From this assemblage of cars, Oldsmobile placed three cars in the first ten. Cadillac two (third added later), Nash one (later disqualified), and Lincoln one.

The heavy American cars showed their superiority at the start of the race on the long, comparatively level stretches. As the cars approached the mountainous section near Mexico City, the European cars began to move up, but the advantage established by the leaders was too great to overcome.

Al Rogers, three-time winner of the Pike's Peak Hill Climb, described the race as a "car killer." He said that "basically the strain on the driver in any one day was less than in a track race, but that the load on the car was tremendous. This was because the race was strictly stock and the cars used were not made for the speed that was maintained." Rogers estimated that on straightaways he was getting a top *speedometer* speed of 118 to 120 mph from his 1949 Cadillac. Bud Sennett, who drove a 1950 Oldsmobile also remarked that the race was different from track driving, being mostly "a test of nerves, skill, and perception of how fast a curve could be taken safely. Although some of the curves were marked with signs, others were not, so that when we entered a curve we had to be prepared for any eventuality." To him the most exhausting thing was keeping the accelerator pushed down to the floorboard on the level stretches in northern Mexico.

Only two types of changes which might

PIERO TARUFFI, famous race driver from Milan, Italy, relaxes for a few moments before starting in his 1950 Alfa-Romeo. Taruffi finished the race eighth, one of two Italian finishers

ACME TELEPHOTO

HERSHEL McGRIFF crosses the finish line at El Ocotal—the winner of the 2178-mile road race. His car, a 1950 Olds, did not have any flats

SEEN with all four wheels off the ground is a 1949 Lincoln, driven by Jesus Gonzalez. Practically all cars left the road at this point because of a sudden dip, followed by a sharp rise

affect the over-all speed were permitted on the cars, these being the use of any type of tire and substitution of shock absorbers because of the mountainous route of the race.

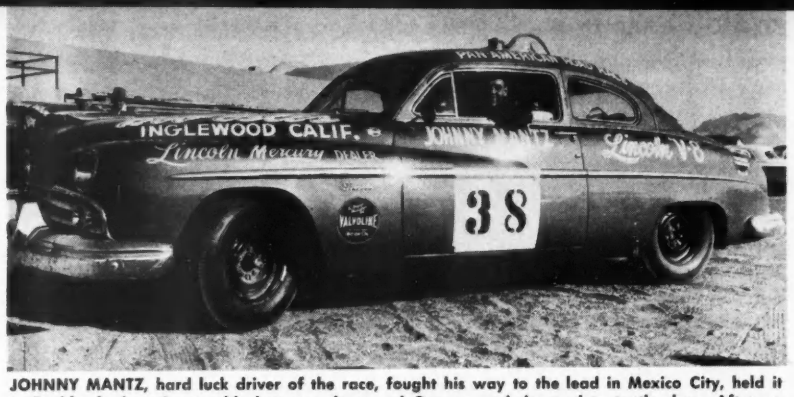
The Mexican gasoline which was used in all the cars, 80 octane Super Mexolina, was said by most drivers to be satisfactory. In some instances, some of the drivers had to use lower octane Mexolina, and found it surprisingly trouble-free. Fuel consumption, naturally, was quite low because of the terrific speeds kept up during most of the race.

ODDS AND ENDS: Only weather difficulty on the 2178-mile grind was a strong, dusty wind on the first leg, extreme heat on the first two legs, and rain on the Oaxaca-Tuxtla leg . . . Although there appeared to be a fair share of accidents and engine trouble, tires caused drivers the greatest over-all loss of time. . . . There is talk of another race next year, again to celebrate the opening of another highway, possibly the one from Matamoros to Mazatlan, or from Nogales to Guadalajara. . . . Antonio Cornejo and his immediate aides deserve a lot of credit for organizing such an event from scratch. . . . The majority of cars finishing were 1949 and 1950 models; the oldest was a 1939 Cadillac in 31st place. . . . Cars finishing were grouped as follows: Olds (9), Cadillac (9), Lincoln (7), Buick (5), Ford (4), Mercury (4), Nash (3), Studebaker (3), Chevrolet (3), Alfa-Romeo (2), Chrysler (2), Delahaye (1) and Hudson (1). . . . Closest to the top for each car ('49 or '50 model), and before disqualification of any cars, was as follows: 1-Oldsmobile, 2-Cadillac, 3-Nash, 5-Alfa-Romeo, 7-Delahaye, 10-Lincoln, 12-Mercury, 15-Ford, 24-Studebaker, 25-Chrysler, 28-Chevrolet, 39-Hudson (1948), and 40-Buick (1948). . . . Oldest driver in the race was Ross Barton, 72, who was promised Mrs. Marie Brookreson's hand in marriage if he won. His car dropped out, but they were married anyway. . . . After the race, the cars that finished in the money were taken to Mexico City, where they were torn down by General Motors experts to make certain the cars were stock. . . . Several cars were followed by spare parts teams, carrying tires and equipment, an obvious advantage because of the weight-saving.

Official results of the race showing the driver, car and total elapsed time are shown below:

PLACE	DRIVER	CAR	ELAPSED TIME
1	Hershel McGriff	1950 Oldsmobile	27:34:25
2	Thomas A. Deal	1950 Cadillac	27:35:41
3	Al Rogers	1949 Cadillac	27:55:39
4	Felice Bonetto	1950 Alfa-Romeo	28:01:04
5	Bud Sennett	1950 Oldsmobile	28:02:21
6	Jean Trevoux	1950 Delahaye	28:19:15
7	Luis Leal Solares	1949 Oldsmobile	28:23:54
8	Piero Taruffi	1950 Alfa-Romeo	28:25:36
9	John Mantz	1949 Lincoln	28:27:10
10	Jack McAfee	1949 Cadillac	28:28:03

ONE of the cars on the straight, comparatively level stretches in northern Mexico. It was here that the highest speeds were evident, with averages high as 98.5 mph, top speeds over 100



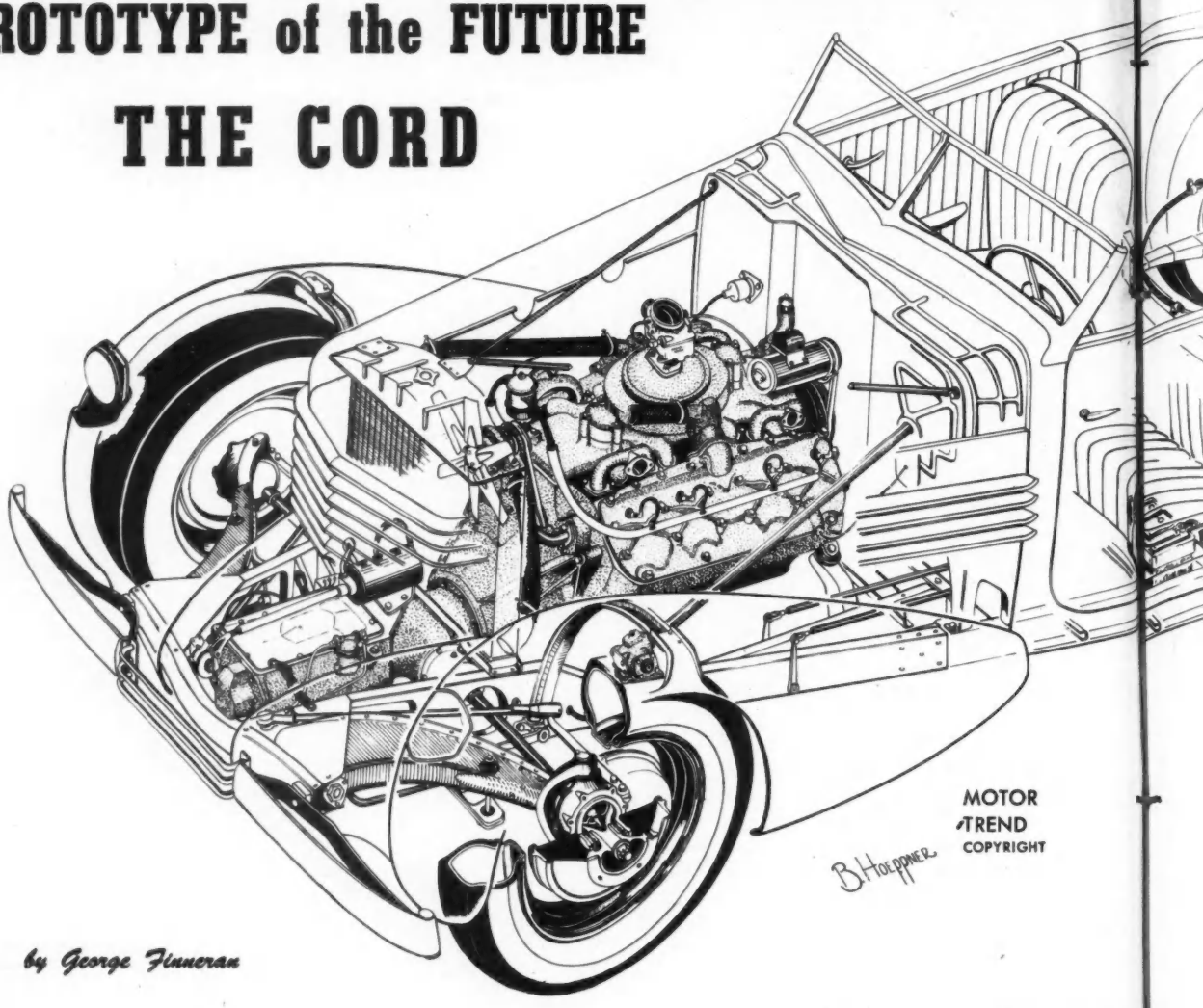
JOHNNY MANTZ, hard luck driver of the race, fought his way to the lead in Mexico City, held it to Puebla, had engine trouble between there and Oaxaca and dropped to tenth place. After an attack of dysentery, which left him with a high fever, he passed 30 other cars on the way to Tuxtla, winning that leg and climbing back to fourth place. Bad tires plagued him on the last leg and he arrived in El Ocotal in ninth place, riding on three tires, one rim, and only rear brakes operative

LINED up at the assembly point in Juarez are the 131 starters, including practically all makes of American and some foreign cars. From here the cars paraded single file to the starting line at outskirts of town. Cars started in groups of 20, one minute apart, five minutes between groups

GOVERNOR MIRAMONTES of Chihuahua drops the flag on the first car in line, a 1950 Hudson, driven by Luis Davalos of Mexico. Official starter (in white shirt) started the remaining cars

PROTOTYPE of the FUTURE

THE CORD



by George Finneran

I REELED out of the library into the street, sheaves of reference-book requests (stamped by the librarian "NOT AVAILABLE") clutched in my trembling hands.

"Five-ball universal joints, four-ball universal joints, six-ball universal joints!" I muttered feverishly, wandering over to the gutter. A flash of sunlight caught my eye. I looked down the street, and there, parked against a fireplug, was—a Cord! One headlight was retracting and un-retracting, as if to attract my attention.

"Ah, a Cord," I said. "A 1937, unsupercharged Beverly sedan, in fair shape."

I kicked its right front tire affectionately.

"Don't do that!" said the Cord crossly. "You'll make my universals leak."

"Well, whaddya know, a talking Cord!" I said "How come you can talk?"

"I went to a drive-in theatre the other night. If a stupid mule can talk, I can."

"Tell me about yourself," I said, spreading my reference slips on the curb and sitting down. "I'm supposed to write an article about your crowd and I can't find any references. You're a pretty mysterious type of car, you are."

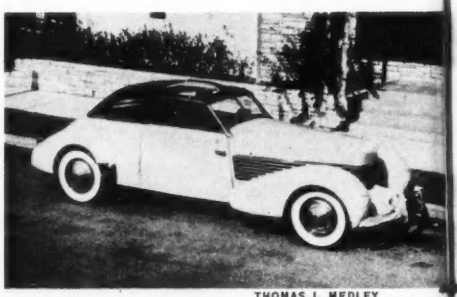
"I was born in Auburn, raised in N.Y.C.," sang the Cord huskily, to the tune of "Dirty Dog Blues."

I raised my foot to kick its front tire. "OK, OK, I'll talk," said the Cord, "what do you want to know?"

I said I wanted to know who designed him, what made him run, what was his lineage.

"Well, suppose we start with my older brother, the L-29 Cord, born back in 1929. The L-29 was a front-wheel drive car like me," began Franky (that was his name). "A lotta automobile 'experts' say that the L-29 was a doggy car, but the fact is, the L-29 was one of the real sharp cars of its day. For instance, did you know that the 1930 Cord won 39 prizes at European Rallies, honors such as: First Grand Prize, Concours d'Elegance, Cannes; First Prize, Concours d'Elegance, Berlin; Grand Prix, plus Cup of Honor, Monte Carlo? And that Cord convertible sedans and coupes were sold to King Carol of Romania, Prince Yamashina of Japan? That four French custom body builders, and also Castagna of Italy, used convertible Cord bodies to display their latest designs at the Paris Salon in 1930, Castagna featuring a close-coupled phaeton that was real-gone?"

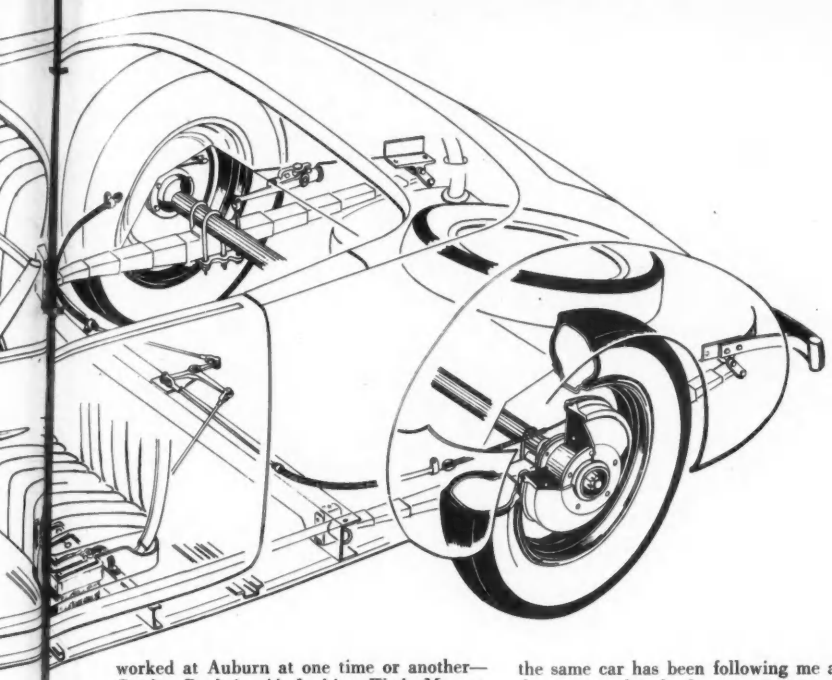
Tom Mix, the cowboy king, was mad for Cords, as was Sonja Henie, Primo Carnera, and many other famous people. Besides the four body styles on the stock list—convertible coupe, convertible sedan, brougham, and sedan—many custom body designers in the U.S. also built bodies on this chassis. Murphy and Le Grande probably did the greatest number of these.



THOMAS J. MEDLEY

A 1937 Cord Convertible that has had the top removed, and replaced with a removable sedan top that has molded Plexiglas sections over the front seat. Side windows are original

The Auburn Automobile Company was, of course, the builder of Cord cars. E. L. Cord spark-plugged this company, which controlled Duesenberg, Lycoming Motors, and other firms. Some of the best talent in the industry



worked at Auburn at one time or another—Gordon Beuhrig, Ab Jenkins, Wade Morton, Alexis de Sakhnoffsky, several others.

The specifications of the L-29 vary here and there during the three years it was built, but basically they are: Eight cylinder, L-head Lycoming engine; 125 hp; 3¼-inch x 4½-inch stroke and bore, 298.6 cu. in. displacement (after engine number 4443, 3⅜-inch x 4½-inch, 322 cu. in. displacement); 5.25:1 compression ratio; 137½-inch wheelbase; Lockheed hydraulic brakes; front-wheel drive, using Hypoid differential, double universal joints on each wheel; X-frame; 700x18 tires; weight, 4705 lbs. for four-door sedan; priced around $2500 for the convertible sedan in 1930. The Cord was designed as a specialty car—40 per cent of its production was convertibles as compared to the industry's average convertible production in those years of 10 per cent. It was probably the lowest car on the road during its production years and surely the first car with the clear front compartment—the gearshift knob extended a few inches out of the center of the dashboard. To shift, you pushed it in and pulled it out, turning the knob to left and right to select gears; for instance, first was turn to the left and push forward, second was turn the knob to the right and pull back towards you, and so forth. Mechanical linkage, of course.

After 1932, the L-29 was discontinued and the Auburns were concentrated on by the company until 1935, when the last Cord was designed and put into production.

The 1936-1937 Cord, Models 810-812, was a factory-designed car; no one, to date, has claimed the entire credit for its design. I sincerely doubt if any other car has aroused as much controversy as the 'Coffin-nose,' as its detractors called it. Its critics have even attacked the Cord's stock car speed record (Unlimited Flying Mile, stock closed cars, 107.66) on the grounds that the Supercharged 1937 sedan which Ab Jenkins drove for the AAA record was a 'Custom' model of which the requisite number (25 built, at least 475 scheduled for production in a year) were never made. I don't know if the exact number of 225 hp Cords was made, but there was at least more than one, unless the same car has been following me all over the country for the last ten years.

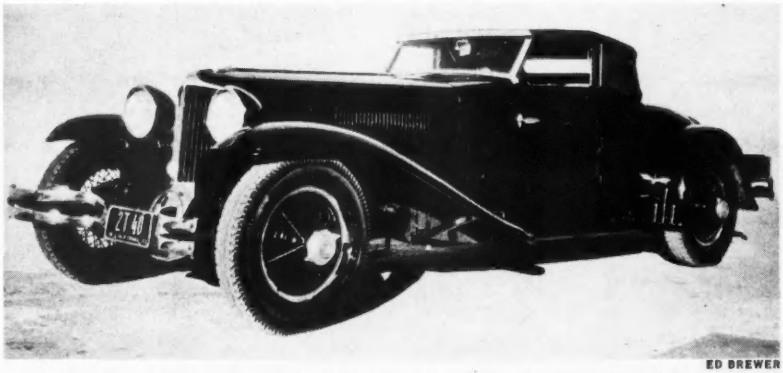
Whether or not you liked the car, it was certainly the most advanced thing on the road in 1936. With its pontoon fenders, 45-degree windshield, sloping back, airplane-type dash, disappearing top (on the convertibles), concealed door hinges, lack of running-boards, flushed-in tail lights and gas-hatch, it was the advanced design of its day. Many of its features were adopted by the rest of the industry, and one of the strange sights of 1937 was a salesman of a competing make of car pointing with pride to the features of his product that he had scoffed at the year before when they appeared on the Cord.

There are minor differences between the 1936 and 1937 Cords, but it is basically the same engine, body, and equipment both years. The supercharged model was available only in 1937, although it is possible to install the supercharger on a 1936 engine without too much difficulty. A supercharged engine has a larger timing-chain and gear, and has a back-and-forth firing order as compared with the unsupercharged engine's left bank-right bank firing order. The supercharged engine has the fuel pump mounted low on the right side of the block; on the unsupercharged engine, the fuel pump is usually behind the distributor. Some Cords came equipped with electric fuel pumps, although there doesn't seem to be any rule about this. Some Cords have a Bendix floating shoe brake; others have an anchored shoe. Most 1937 Cords have the good universals on them—the Bendix five-ball joint, which has been reported to give 80,000 miles of service without trouble. And as long as we're on universal joints, let me pass on the opinion given me as to the source of universal joint trouble in Cords. The consensus of opinion seems to be: One, most Cord owners do not, and have not, serviced the joints with the proper lubricant, nor at proper intervals; Two, most Cord owners did, and still do, ruin the universals by too much cornering-under-power; Three, the 1936 model, with its 'Rzeppa' joints (six-ball?) and also a four-ball which may have been a factory joint, were not as good as the later-model Bendix five-ball.

There are other faults of the Cord which detract from its general excellence of design—most of which, however, can be remedied if you know about them. The engine was too close to the firewall, making the timing-chain and gear hard to get at; many Cord owners have cut a hatch in the firewall to compensate for this error. Low gear on the Cord transmission is made of too soft a metal and eventually, fine steel particles from this gear will get into the other gear bearings and ruin them—replace first gear with a good hard-steel gear. The gear lock on the transmission has a tendency to hold a slipping, worn gear in place, come hell or highwater, thus ruining the rails. This too, can be remedied. The main gearshaft had a tendency to get out of round; grinding down, and rechroming to size will correct this in most cases. Even with its over-size timing-gear and chain, the supercharged models were tough on these parts due to acceleration and deceleration lag—there's nothing much to be done about this, however. The aluminum heads were pretty thin, and very expensive—they still are. Outside of all this, you had a good car, certainly one of the most interesting ever produced in the United States.

The Cord might be said to be the major influence on the restyled cars of today. It was actually a channeled job; the frame and body were what the Cord catalogue describes as 'one-piece, self-contained.' Cord was probably one of the first cars in the world to use what we now call 'undercoating.' The fenders and smooth metal underbody were sprayed with a rubber composition to reduce road and engine noise, which is one of the reasons Cord fenders sound so heavy when you rap on them. Those retractable headlights, by the way, were supposed to add five miles per hour to the car, according to the blurbs,

(Continued on page twenty-six)



ED BREWER

1930 L-29 Cord Cabriolet. That year Cord won 39 prizes at European Rallies for beauty

MOTOR TRIALS

1950 OLDSMOBILE

IN A fast slide on dirt, the Oldsmobile 88 maintained surprising traction and equilibrium

by Walter A. Woron

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS J. MEDLEY

ALTHOUGH one brake grabbed near the end of this check, the car did not swerve and stopped in a short distance for its weight

UP A 32 per cent grade, the Olds had no trouble in climbing in 'low' range and scooted up the steep hill at 30 mph in the 'drive' range

THE 1950 Oldsmobile bears the distinction of being the first stock car tested by MOTOR TREND to exceed 90 mph. There is small wonder that the Oldsmobile 88 owner has a feeling of superiority and definite pride in ownership. It is a car of power—evident in its top speed, in its acceleration qualities, in the figures given by the chassis dynamometer, and in its power curves.

The Oldsmobile 88 four-door sedan used for this trial was a demonstrator, with 2160 miles on the odometer, and a car that is in constant use by Muller Brothers of 6380 Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood, California. Properly tuned and with this amount of mileage on the engine, the car was in good condition for testing.

Unfortunately, for the top speed runs, our test strip did not have a sufficient approach distance, for the car did not reach its maximum speed until after it had entered the ¼-mile trap. However, a most satisfactory top-speed, one-way time of 92.11 mph was recorded. For the average of four runs, we obtained a time of 91.37 mph, fairly close to the speed of 93 mph in tests conducted by the Oldsmobile Division of General Motors.

At high speeds, the Oldsmobile has good stability, allowing fast control and recovery. Its acceleration stems from quick flowing power, not the type that snaps your neck back with each gear change, but rather the type that pins you to your seat and keeps you there until you release your foot from the throttle. The road hp, as indicated on the chassis dynamometer at Muller Brothers, was exceptionally high, considering that this figure takes into consideration normal losses through the transmission (in this case, Hydra-Matic), differential, and rolling resistance of the tires to the road. The full load condition at 2000 rpm gave a figure of 81 road hp, while the maximum road hp. observed at 62 mph and 2800 rpm, was 92.5.

There are several reasons for the power in the Oldsmobile Rocket. The engine is designed on the following basic principles: to operate smoothly at compression ratios up to 12:1 (now using only 7.25:1); to take advantage of overhead valves, since it is planned to go above 8:1, the normally accepted ratio at which 'L' head efficiency begins to fall off; reduced detonation and pre-ignition through cooler intake manifold temperatures and good engine cooling; through its size to give the desired performance, with the compression ratio predicated on the fuels available; and to cause minimum tooling changes when it becomes necessary to effect a compression ratio increase from 7.25:1 to 12:1.

A quick review of the Rocket's general design and specifications indicates a highly efficient engine. This 90-degree, overhead valve V-8 uses a comparatively economical method of getting a stiff crankshaft, using five main bearings. Also provided are large diameter bores, permitting a stroke/bore ratio of 0.92:1, which results in improved mechanical efficiency: a maximum installed torque of 240 ft-lbs, a maximum installed hp of 122, and a weight/hp ratio of 5.5:1.

Testing Operations

Steering and cornering characteristics of the Oldsmobile 88 are good, considering that the steering ratio has been increased in the 1950 models to 25:1. Although this would normally make for slower control, at no time was sloppiness felt at the steering wheel. This ratio also permits greater ease in parking and in city driving.

The Hydra-Matic transmission for 1950 has improvements of note, one of these being that the LOW range ratio has been increased to 3.82:1 to make easier removal of the car from sand or soft ground, and for driving up steep inclines. The hydraulic control system has also been modified to produce smoother shifts, although, as with most automatic transmissions, there is considerable whine before ample torque is developed to get the car under way. Although LOW is usually used only for hard pulls, it can also be used for added acceleration by starting the car in LOW and shifting to the DRIVE position at about 40 mph. With the Hydra-Matic transmission, if it becomes necessary to start the car by pushing, the selector lever should first be placed in the NEUTRAL position. When the car reaches a speed of 18 to 20 mph, the ignition is turned on and the lever is moved to DRIVE. If the car is pushed or towed above 25 mph, the drive shaft should be disconnected, otherwise damage to the transmission might result.

Acceleration of the Olds 88 has been mentioned previously, but other points of interest are as follows: In the standing start ¼-mile, the acceleration time was improved by almost one second when starting in LOW

and shifting to DRIVE. Although it is possible, when in fourth gear in the DRIVE position, to depress the throttle just sufficiently to prevent the transmission from dropping to third gear, the acceleration is noticeably improved when a change in gears is made.

In fuel consumption the 1950 Mobilgas Grand Canyon Run bore out economy tests made previously at the General Motors Proving Grounds. In the Economy Run, which was over 751 miles of all types of terrain and weather, the Oldsmobile 88 averaged 20.19 mpg at an average speed of 41.37 mph. At the General Motors Proving Grounds, the Oldsmobile 88 was definitely proved more economical than the previous in-line 8, for at a steady speed of 50 mph it averaged 18.75 mpg.

The brakes on the car are hydraulic self-energizing type with cast-iron braking surfaces, and have a brake lining area of 191.7 square inches. A mechanical parking brake is used on the rear wheels. Operation of the brake pedal is typical of all self-energizing types, in which sufficient braking action is provided, but has the trait of causing the nose to dip in heavy traffic where it is necessary to constantly use the brakes. Brake fade was not noticeable at any time, even with severe use. The brake stopping figures are shown in the *Table of Performance*.

The hill climb characteristics of the Oldsmobile were quite surprising, for on a grade of 32 per cent (32 feet in rise for every 100 feet ahead) the car maintained the following speeds: 29 mph in second gear with the selector in LOW and 30 mph in second gear with the selector lever in DRIVE. On hills it is possible to hold the car without rolling backwards by slightly opening the throttle, although this is not recommended for an extended time on steep hills.

Discussion of Mechanical Features

In general appearance, the Oldsmobile 88 follows the current trend in domestic body design: massive grille, full fenders, and liberal use of chrome. It appears that the Oldsmobile might be the next car of the General Motors Corporation to use an integral grille and bumper, for it is closely approaching that design at present. Some chrome of a non-practical value is evident on the Oldsmobile, although most of it is put to use, for example, the chrome rub strips along the front and rear bumpers.

The frame is composed of rigid channel longitudinal members and 'X' bracing, suspended independently in front with 'A' frames and coil springs, and coil springs at the rear axle. Tubular shocks are used at all four wheels. Sway bars, front and rear, dampen much of the sidesway.

Interior appointments are of good quality, from the nylon fabric upholstery (Deluxe models only) to the chromed window cranks and door handles. The instrument panel is plain, with all instruments conveniently grouped around the steering column.

When the hood is raised, a well-packed compartment is revealed. All components are in a position to allow a mechanic to easily perform any removals or repairs. Major engine work would be comparatively easy.

The trunk compartment has a spring-release type key latch, the emblem being used to raise the lid, an easy task even for a woman because of the use of overcenter springs. In spite of the advantage in the tire being located to one side in a vertical position (allowing removal of baggage or tire without disturbing the other), it still occupies much of the luggage volume, which would otherwise be sufficient for most uses. This is a problem confronting all manufacturers.

Changing of tires in the event of a flat should not be difficult, since two jack lift pads are provided in each bumper. A notch in the bumper adjacent to each wheel is used as the jack lift pad. Without a bumper jack, however, tire changing would be a slight problem.

Although the doors open fairly wide, if they opened slightly wider they would provide for easier egress with an armload of packages. In the closed position, the door handles have to be pulled up to release, which is a desirable safety factor.

The seat is fairly rigid, offering good support, but the wheel is at too high an angle for best driving comfort. Since the seat is at a high level, however, the wheel does not block the view. Vision is very good in all directions—the window posts are narrow, with the relationship between the posts and the normal sitting position being such as to not cause a blind spot to the left front at any time. Sufficient leg room is provided in front, but is limited to that of a club coupe in the rear seat. Head room is adequate in the front and rear seats.

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	
Type	90-degree, ohv V-8
Bore and Stroke	3¾ x 3 7/16
Stroke/Bore Ratio	0.92:1
Cubic Inch Displacement	303.7
Maximum Bhp	135 @ 3600 rpm
Bhp/Cu. In.	0.44
Maximum Torque, as installed	240 ft.-lbs.
Pounds/Bhp (Car Weight)	29.7
Compression Ratio	7.25:1
DIMENSIONS	
Wheelbase	119½ ins.
Tread	Front—57, Rear—59 ins.
Overall Width	75 5/16 ins.
Overall Height	64 1/16 ins.
Overall Length	202 ins.
Turning Radius	20 ft.

TABLE OF PERFORMANCE

DYNAMOMETER TEST	
2000 rpm (full load)—47 mph	81 road hp
2800 rpm—62 mph (max. hp reading)	92.5 road hp
ACCELERATION TRIALS	
Standing start, ¼-mile	:20.47 (Dr), :19.86 (Lo-Dr)
0-30 mph through gears	:04.60 (Dr), :03.99 (Lo)
0-60 mph through gears	:12.44 (Dr), :12.22 (Lo-Dr)
10-60 mph in high	:11.91 (Dr)
30-60 mph in high	:11.96 (4th), :08.45 (3rd)
TOP SPEED	
Fastest one-way run	92.11 mph
Average of four runs	91.74 mph
BRAKE CHECK	
Stopping distance at 30 mph	27 ft. 2 in.
Stopping distance at 60 mph	164 ft. 9 in.
FUEL CONSUMPTION	
Mobilgas Grand Canyon Run (average 41.37 mph)	20.19 mpg
At a steady 50 mph	18.75 mpg

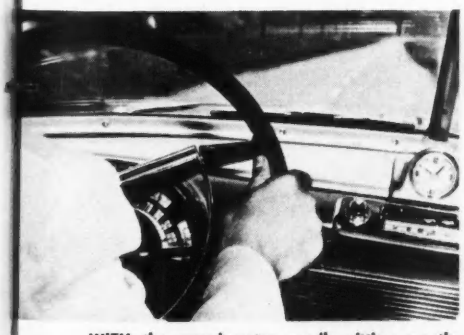
In Brief

It is not easy, in looking back at the test of the 88, to prescribe or suggest improvements—the car was notably free of mechanical difficulties. However, items that could be improved include a quieter transmission, lowering of the steering wheel, increased leg room for the rear seat, increased ground clearance (especially at the front end where the bumper will bottom over deep ruts), a larger door in the rear fender for the gas filler neck (with a glove on, it is practically impossible to remove the cap), wider opening doors, and an engine location further aft to improve handling.

As far as immediate power increases are concerned, the person who is not satisfied with the adequate acceleration of the Oldsmobile could install an Italmeccanica blower, which will be available for these cars in the near future. Dual intake manifolds are also available. It is not recommended that the heads be milled to increase the compression ratio, since this will disrupt the valve mechanism and misalign the intake ports.

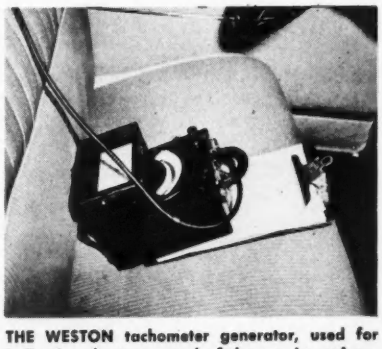
Oldsmobile engineers have anticipated the day when higher octane fuels will be available, and have conducted tests on a revised production engine of 12:1 compression ratio. Despite the decrease in displacement from 303 to 288 cubic inches, the as-installed horsepower of the engine was increased from 122 to 134, and the as-installed torque was increased from 250 to 260 foot pounds.

For its price, it would be difficult to obtain a car equal in performance to the Oldsmobile 88. It is evident that Oldsmobile engineers have looked years ahead in the design of the overhead valve V-8. Undoubtedly other General Motors products will be following the same pattern set so effectively by Cadillac and Oldsmobile, as will other automotive manufacturers.



WITH the speedometer needle sitting on the 100 mph mark, one of the top speed runs is made with the 1950 Olds 88 demonstrator

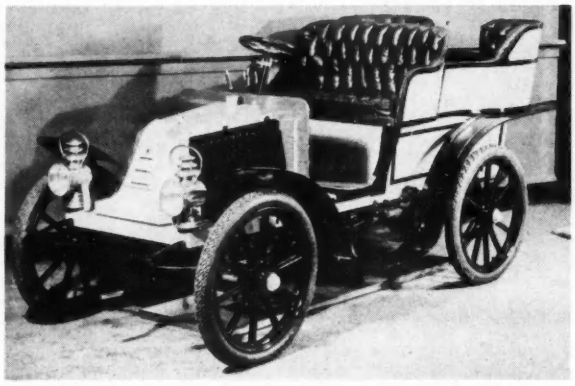
POWER for the Olds 88 is derived from an overhead V-8, delivering 135 bhp. Unusual feature is the lower-than-unity stroke/bore ratio



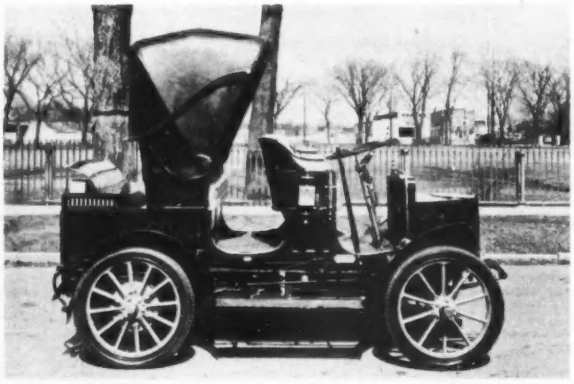
THE WESTON tachometer generator, used for indicating the true speed of the car, in conjunction with the fifth wheel on rear bumper

A COLLECTOR'S COLLECTOR

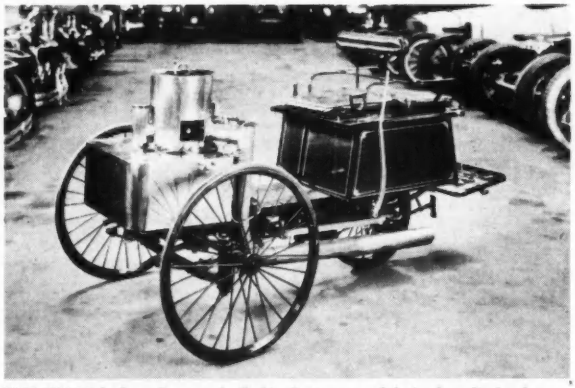
LANDAULET body for this 1911 Daimler was built by Woods. Powerplant is 15 hp four-cylinder Knight engine. Controls are outside of cab



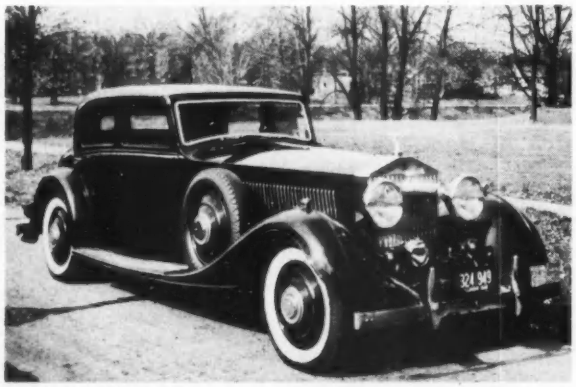
REAR ENTRANCE tonneau Renault, circa 1902-1903, powered by one-cylinder 8 hp engine. This year running boards were introduced here



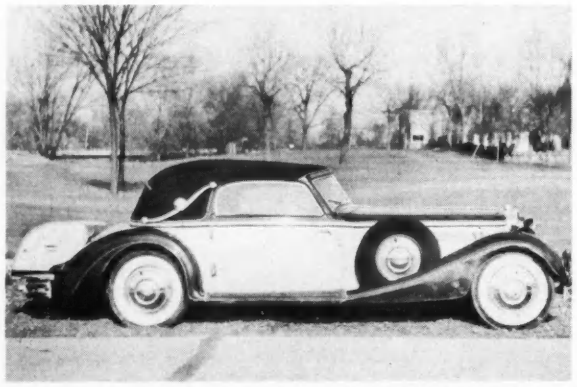
1902 GARDNER Serpollet Model F surrey steamer with Victoria body by Kellner. Brake shoes on rear tires make for inadequate braking



FIVE YEARS before Duryea built his first successful single-cylinder horseless carriage, this DeDion coke-burning steamer was in operation



ANSWERING the criticism of some that Rolls-Royce made a slow car is this 1934 Model P-2 with close-coupled body, capable of 98 mph

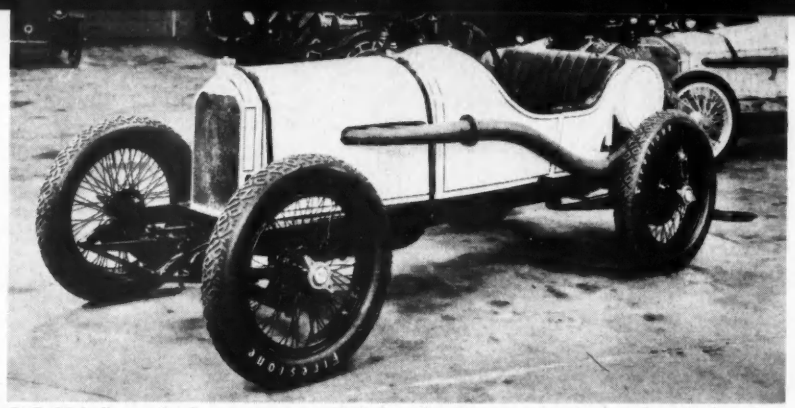


THE PRESTIGE car of the Auto-Union combine is this fine specimen of prewar German coachwork, Type 853, 8-cyl., Horch Cabriolet, circa 1937

D. CAMERON PECK, OWNER OF THE WORLD'S MOST UNUSUAL CAR COLLECTION

by Colonel Alexis de Sakhnoffsky

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM D. CAMERON PECK COLLECTION



ONE OF Indianapolis' first race cars—a 1913 three-litre Peugeot, victorious at the 500 that year

UNUSUAL as it may seem, one of the world's largest collections of automobiles is not to be found in the museums of England, France or Italy. It is housed in an immaculate 20,000 sq. ft. building on a quiet street in a Chicago suburb—Evanston, Ill.

D. Cameron Peck, its originator and owner, is a collector, a collector's collector, whose versatility and all-around knowledge of American and foreign cars of all vintages is probably unparalleled anywhere in the world. A perfectionist as to details, he has spent 18 years combing the world for specimens that are most representative of automobile progress—individual coachwork or interesting, unorthodox solutions by inspired international engineers.

Patiently refining his collection (between 1933-1950 he has owned over 400 cars) by acquiring vehicles of desirable background and condition, he has held occasional sales to avoid duplication. His surplus cars have been offered to fellow club members at cost and have been sold only to recognized collectors.

In 1933 he established a goal by outlining the cross-section of models which he considered to be the most outstanding in the history of the automobile. He then went after them with such an enthusiasm that even though World War II must have somewhat slowed his progress, he feels that he has practically achieved his ambition: there are few cars left that he would like to add to his collection.

The unique feature of his museum is that every one of the 125 cars, which it now comprises, is in working order. Every one has been completely restored and the exterior finish, the authentic striping, the magnificent upholstery and new tires of original size are a delight to the eye.

Upon acquiring a vintage car, mechanics go over it with a fine-tooth comb. An exceptionally fine upholsterer, using imported British Vaumol leathers, completely rehabilitates sagging seats, recovers tops and puts in new carpets (when necessary). From then on the whole fleet is kept in running order, even including the coke-burning 1888 De Dion which, according to Mr. Peck, is the oldest known car in running condition.

When parts are not available, they are machined by hand, following research and literature of the period. This information is filed and cross-indexed in Mr. Peck's extensive, private library, which even includes copies of music and lyrics of all songs devoted to the automobile.

A peculiarity of Mr. Peck's hobby is that he is just as thrilled by the acquisition of a rare 1901 Renault, as by the latest Castagna-bodied Ferrari 12. His collection is not limited to cars alone, but includes some twenty boats, ranging from naphtha launches to steam yachts, as well as many marine engines. The walls of his museum within the main museum are covered with irreplaceable posters, depicting the 1901 Moscow Automobile Show, Alpine trials and original sketches of famous race drivers. A vintage music box that plays perforated metal records adds the proper nostalgic sounds for the reconstruction of a past era.

What makes a man start such a hobby? For the benefit of the readers of MOTOR TREND, Mr. Peck deigned to forego his steadfast decision to refuse all former interviews. A slim, youthful man in his forties, he willingly reminisced about his childhood. From a tender age automobiles held for him a unique fascination. His large collection of mechanical toys and scale reproduction of vehicles of all kinds, which are scattered all over his studio, is a living proof of his early interest. He considers a car a romantic object, which has influenced more than anything else the progress of the world and brought to us the living conditions which we now enjoy.

The building which houses his collection bears no name plate. From the entrance door the visitor steps directly into a large, carpeted room, used for social gatherings. Here, among a drawing-room grouping of furniture, are displayed a half dozen vintage cars and a few fine automobile trophies, dominated by the impressive Elgin Road Race Cup.

The half dozen cars include such rarities as a white-painted American Underslung, a small Hispano type Alphonse XIII roadster in tan and copper with white rubber mats, a 1902 steam-engined Gardner-Serpollet with tufted biscuit-colored leather seats and a tiny 1888 De Dion steamer complete with hand-operated poker. Mr. Peck mentioned that the Gardner-Serpollet is still one of the snappiest cars he owns, though its performance is sharply handicapped by totally inadequate brakes. (Note the bicycle type brakes visible on the photo. The brake shoe rubs directly against the rear tire.)

The next room, as large as a full-sized assembly room in an auto-factory, has five rows of cars. A sleek, low, maroon front-wheel drive Miller racing car rubs bumpers with a 1913 three-litre (183 cu. in.) Indianapolis Peugeot. Four front-wheel drive Ruxtons of 1931 vintage, in assorted colors, face a tremendous Ford Victoria (Model K, six-cyl. 1907-08), with an oversized Model T copper radiator. The latest model, three-carburetor Competition Model Delahaye convertible, an XK-120 Jaguar sports car and a Ferrari V-12 form a proud, contemporary group.

Belgium is represented by Minervas with Van den Plas and D'Ieteren Freres bodies. The Italian display consists of several fine Isotta Fraschinis with elaborate Castagna and Farina bodies, older vintage Fiats and a beautiful, recent, cream and brown 2.3-litre (140.3 cu. in.) Alfa-Romeo.

Great Britain covers quite a bit of ground with some ten Rolls-Royces and several Bentleys. A multitude of fine examples of historic French cars include De Dion, Leon Bollee, Renault, Ballot, Peugeot and several Hispanos. One Darracq-Zeppelin torpedo, built in 1912, has a wooden body designed to simulate the shape of a dirigible.

Our own American museum pieces include a 1906 Adams Farwell with a rotary five-cylinder engine, a Success high-wheel runabout designed in 1906 for farm work and featuring tiller steering, several White and Stanley steamers, a Haynes-Apperson Runabout 1902 and a multitude of others.

The adjoining hangar is the restoration laboratory. I noticed a magnificent supercharged Duesenberg (ex-Gary Cooper's), with a light tan roadster body by Bohman & Schwartz, which had its apple-green and chrome-finished engine overhauled. Next to it a striking phaeton with a divided windshield in a mahogany frame sported an oval opening for the driver and an oblong opening for the front seat passenger. It was a Prince Henry type Austro-Daimler.

Mr. Peck fully realizes that a great many of his cars are irreplaceable. Determined to keep his collection in an ideal condition, he has decided to preclude opening it to the public, although many of his cars are on loan at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, where he donates his services as curator of transportation. It is a connoisseur's paradise and he intends to keep it as such. However, fellow members of several automobile clubs to which he belongs and all those with a legitimate interest have found the owner most cooperative in the promotion of the automobile cause.

President of both the Sports Car Club of America and the Antique Automobile Club, member of every vintage car association in the world (and this includes Australia and New Zealand), Mr. Peck is also member of the Bentley and Bugatti drivers clubs of Great Britain. A tireless worker, his endless enthusiasm has made possible the surprising growth of interest and membership in the Sports Car Club's and Antique Automobile Club's Midwest regional units.

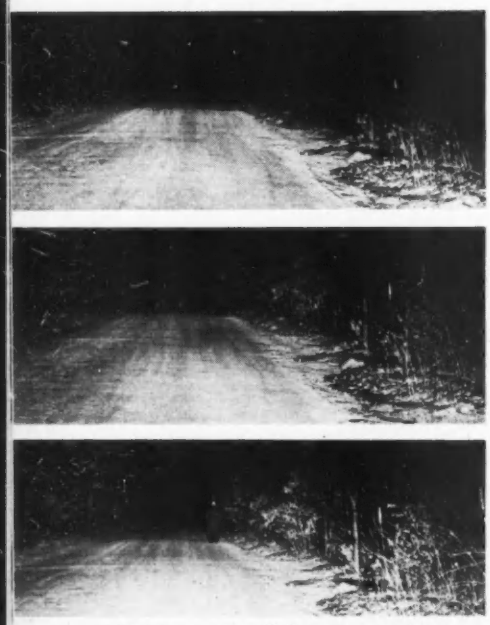
He plans to enjoy this hobby during his living years, turning over the collection to a Foundation after his death. An endowment will ensure continued research, with the facilities provided by the Peck auto-museum and his library.

HOW ABOUT THIS QUESTION OF . . .

POLAROID vs. SEALED BEAM

by V. S. Logue

DIFFERENCE in glare is visual in this comparison: top, sealed beam versus same in your car; bottom, Polaroid versus same in your car



THREE types of headlight systems provide varying degrees of vision: top, sealed beam upper beams; center, Polaroid upper beam with viewer in position; and, Polaroid upper, no viewer

MOST AUTOMOBILE owners interested in future trends have heard of Polaroid lights and pondered the possibility of adapting them to their own automobile. This, however, is not as simple as it sounds. Many problems confront the engineer attempting this modification. Extensive research has been carried out by the Polaroid Corporation and the General Electric Company at the General Motors Proving Grounds at Detroit. The objective point concerning these tests was to achieve a suitable answer to one important question above all else and that is: Will the application of a Polaroid lighting system solve the highway safety problems now attendant with headlight glare?

In the past thirty years the highway lighting problem has been a most important one, and the necessity to improve road visibility for night driving has caused several evolutions in headlight advancements. The latest of these advancements has been the transition from the bulb-reflector type equipment to the more advanced sealed beam units. In this process automobile manufacturers established a specified time after which all production models would incorporate the more advanced type of lighting equipment. Owners of automobiles manufactured prior to this date were offered the opportunity of purchasing conversion units requisite to their particular model in order that their equipment might meet the more recent standards. This same transition from a sealed beam lighting system to a Polaroid lighting system is now possible.

Polaroid light has just recently been made *technically* available for the average automobile owner. Research in the field of Polaroid light has produced results which eliminate highway public enemy No. 1, "Headlight Glare." However, certain barriers must be removed before its introduction on new cars can be fully realized. The chief problem concerning the adoption of this improved headlighting system is that of public reaction. Experts in this field have withheld their opinions and predictions for lack of information concerning public response.

In establishing a comparison between the physical characteristics of Polaroid light and those of ordinary light it is noted that there is no difference realized when observed by the unaided eye. It is only when a polarizer, such as a plastic sheet, is used that there is a visual difference to the observer. By the addition of this interceptor or viewer, light intensity is reduced and common glare characteristics are removed.

To enlighten the reader, a few of the basic technicalities involved in polarizing light rays are considered. A light ray may be represented as a beam of light comprised of numerous vibrations which exist in all possible directions perpendicular to its path of travel. A light ray projected from an incandescent bulb, such as an automobile headlamp, will incorporate many separate vibrations along which the ray is traveling. These vibrations produce the effect known as headlight glare. A polarizer will eliminate all vibrations except those parallel to its axis. With this understanding it is easy to see that light may also pass through two polarizers whose axes are parallel, but is completely blocked when one of the polarizers is rotated 90 degrees.

To illustrate this explanation, a simple experiment may be performed by the reader. As a substitute for a polarizer an ordinary pocket comb may be used. As this polarizer is passed through a mass of tangled hair, the hair aligns itself in straight lines relative to the teeth in the comb. Light rays passing through polarizers are treated in much the same way, the difference being that the polarizer, in the case of light, is stationary and the light rays are passing through it. A polarizer whose axis lies in a vertical direction, as compared to the teeth of the comb, would eliminate all existing vibrations (i.e., horizontal, etc.) except those of a vertical nature.

To illustrate a typical highway condition encountered during the period of pre-Polaroid to Polaroid lights, let it be assumed that two automobiles are approaching one another on level highway and in the open country. One vehicle (A) is equipped with Polaroid lights and a Polaroid viewer, which are some of the components required. The other vehicle (B) is equipped with sealed beam lights and a Polaroid viewer-visor mounted inside the cab and adjustable for driver use. The increased beam candlepower of the Polaroid unit would obviously produce blinding effects upon a driver approaching in car B, unless he positions the Polaroid viewer before his eyes and eliminates the glare. (It may be said here that Polaroid light, when received through a Polaroid viewer, assumes a bluish color and has a definite outline in contrast to ordinary light, which has no definite outline due to the halo-glare around it.) To return to the illustration, the driver of car A may position his Polaroid viewer and reduce about 63 per cent of Car B's light.

In an examination of the advantages and the disadvantages between drivers of automobiles A and B, car A (Polaroid) has the greater advantage. The driver of car A is utilizing greater light intensity, which aids visibility along his path of travel, plus a viewer shield, which reduces car B's headlight intensity almost two thirds of its original. The only advantage to the driver of

(*Continued on page twenty-two*)

MG Speed Tuning

by Edward J. P. Cunningham

ONE OF the world's most famous sports cars, the MG, is built at Abingdon-on-Thames, Berkshire, England. Since the inception of the marque in the early 1920's, the initials MG have been a power to cope with in any competitive motor sport. In racing, trials, hill climbs, rallies, international class speed records—in virtually every type of test to which an automobile can be put, the MG holds more than its share of records and awards. Its long history of success has been a chronicle of ultimate achievement in motoring sport for three decades.

Competition, as the name suggests, is causing many MG owners to attempt bettering the car's acceleration, or raising its top speed. The MG owner who wishes to tune his car to deliver better than standard performance is particularly fortunate in that the MG factory not only manufactures special tuning equipment, but also has available a vast amount of information on the subject.

Those owners not satisfied with the acceleration of the MG may increase the brake horsepower output by several methods, the least difficult being the installation of a supercharger.

Supercharger Installation

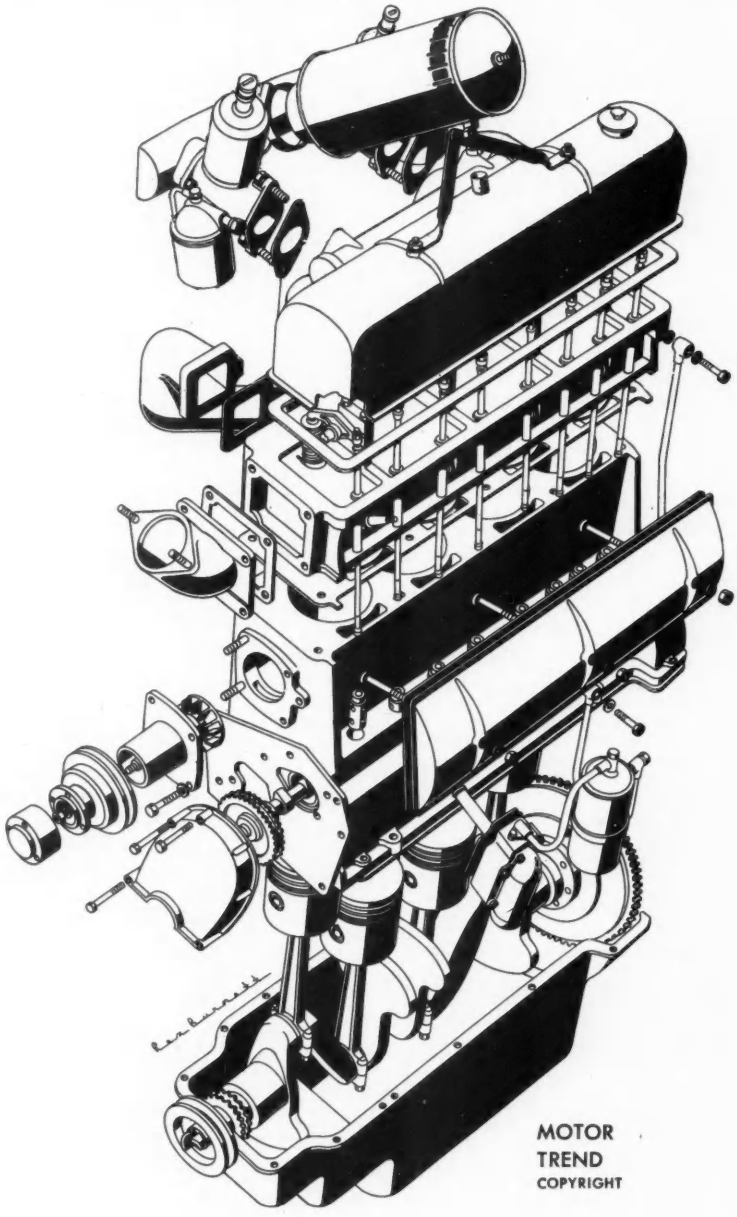
There are several blowers currently being imported that are especially designed for the MG, all are belt-driven from the crankshaft pulley, and function constantly while the engine is running. Two of these superchargers are of the Roots, or contrarotating-impeller, positive-displacement variety, and two are of the eccentric-vane type.

All seem to have approximately the same ultimate effect on engine performance, which is superior in most instances to that obtained with a modified unblown engine. The supercharger, however, by its very nature is a precision instrument, and for that reason is an expensive mechanism to purchase. To those not interested in buying a blower, or desirous of something between the standard and supercharged engine, there is but one answer . . alteration of existing engine parts.

There is, unfortunately, much technical confusion on this subject, and unless the owner has access to the necessary machine tools, with the knowledge of how to use them, it is advisable to have the greater part of the following outlined work done by some competent and well-equipped mechanic. It is also possible for the owner to dismantle the engine, and take the various components to be modified to shops specializing in the type of work the job requires.

Balancing

While the engine is apart, and other work is being done, it is a good plan to have the crankshaft, flywheel, and clutch assembly dynamically balanced. The pistons and connecting rods should be balanced in the proper manner, using an accurate scale, and measuring the balance point carefully. Balancing, as such, is not absolutely essential, but a properly balanced engine makes the faster-than-standard car considerably more pleasant to operate.



Milling the Head

Up to ⅛-inch may be machined from the face of the cylinder head, but in no case should this figure be exceeded, since there is danger of weakening the head, or entering the water passages.

The standard compression ratio is 7.25:1. Removing 3/32-inch of metal represents raising the compression to 8.6:1, milling ⅛-inch from the cylinder head represents a ratio of 9.3:1. If more compression is desired, then special pistons (12:1) should be obtained from an authorized MG dealer, or ordered from the factory. These are used in conjunction with the standard cylinder head.

(Continued on page twenty-seven)

The Light Car Discovered ... Again

by Griffith Borgeson

OF COURSE there's no question that there's a future in this country for the light automobile—our automotive past is the answer. We've had scads of well-respected makes of such cars—Star, Durant, Whippet, Model T and Model A Fords, and Willys, to name a few. These cars gave dependable transportation, reasonable comfort, low-cost operation, and sold at a minimum price. They existed because of the economics of their time, because the seller's market was unknown and the needs of each income group were carefully studied and filled. As late as '42 you could get a smart little Willys Americar for $742, at the factory.

With the war's end, all manufacturers foresaw a short-lived seller's market, and made preparation against the early date when our living standard would shrink and the buyer's dollar would have to be wooed by other means than great bulk and chrome cascades. The big auto builders laid well-conceived plans in silence and continued to offer the public just what the market would bear.

There was a murmuring voice in the background, though—that of Byronic industrialist Henry Kaiser. He made exciting statements to the press about his plans for a new automobile that would combine all the advantages of luxury, economy, and performance—and of course the Big Boys were proved right when Kaiser seemed to kiss the whole idea goodbye and finally produced a very unrevolutionary automobile. So the postwar era continued to offer the buying public what was actually *one* type of car: all makes and models basically the same in terms of roominess, performance, style of body work, and powerplant. Such differences as existed were in degree rather than in kind.

However, Kaiser-Frazer now shares with Nash the distinction of being the first to break the spell—in a big way. This summer, with the buyer's market crawling out of hibernation, the growing state of healthy competition is heralded by the appearance on the American scene of a new *kind* of car, a *light* car . . . not a small car, not a minicar, but a sensible family-sized automobile which, by selling at a lower price, will make for more widespread new-car ownership than has been economically possible in recent years.

So far we've spoken as though the low-price range had been neglected entirely for almost a decade. Of course this isn't the case, but cars of this class that have been available in the U.S. have missed the point by being more or less obviously utility vehicles, and not good-looking cars by the popular standard. It seems to have taken the Italians, French, and English to demonstrate first that automotive luxury can be successfully set to any scale—for example, the fine-bodied Fiat 1100's, Simca 8's, and Austin A-90's, which are elegant in any surroundings. For some reason it required clammy public response to several American forays into the low-priced, scaled-down field to awaken manufacturers to the fact that the American new-car buyer wants something he can really be proud to own. And so we have the Kaiser-Frazer "Henry J." car, and the Nash Rambler. What are they like, and how have their makers approached the problem of giving the public both utility and class in the same vehicle?

We'll start with the K-F product, although, as we go to press, not too much data has been released concerning it. Its wheelbase is in the 100-inch range, it seats four passengers easily and five in a pinch, and will carry huge amounts of luggage or what-have-you. To make possible a low purchase price the car has been "stripped" to a moderate extent. It comes in one body style—a two-door sedan—there is a minimum of embellishments, and such conveniences as no-draft ventilation and a door in the rear deck have been eliminated. These savings will, of course, be passed on to the consumer. The overall appearance of the car is quite good. Lines are flowing and attractive in the conventionally "streamlined" American style. A pleasant amount of chrome meets the eye, fishtail fenders are employed, and you have to double-take to assure yourself that the car really does have a short wheelbase. The general effect is one of neatness, smartness, and class—on a slightly reduced scale.

How practical is the Henry J? Well, visibility is as good as that of larger modern cars, which leaves something to be sought. The body panels are fully exposed, and don't even have the dubious protection of chromed "rubbing" strips. The wrap-around bumpers are sturdy and efficiently designed, the square-section, tubular frame looks strong, but would look more so with cross-bracing. Suspension is by independent coil springs in front, semi-elliptics at the rear. The powerplants (four or six cyls., optional) are huge compared with European cars of similar wheelbase, and promise excellent performance and dependability. Since the engine will seldom be pushed to its peak, as European cars are more often than not, *maintenance* costs should be low and engine life long. Gas mileage should be in the 30-35 range, and an optional overdrive will add several extra mpg. The car will be offered with either a four-cylinder or six-cylinder Willys-K-F engine; the vital statistics will be revealed later. We've had a good look at the bare chassis and it seems to be most dependable. And that's the Henry J: a stylish, reliable machine with luxury fixtures judiciously eliminated, one calculated to bring the thriftier segment of the population a whole lot of transportation for a small investment—and give them pride of ownership, too. Of course, prices have not yet been announced.

The Nash reply to the short-wheelbase question is quite different. Nash has taken the attitude that "small car" is a horrid phrase and insists on labeling it "the low-price car." Whatever you call it, it's perhaps the most interesting and refreshing

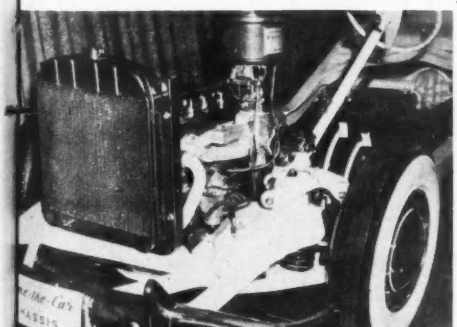
THIS Rambler convertible Landau sedan is the first offering by Nash in this line. Other models to follow will include a station wagon, hardtop sedans and coupes. This is Nash's reply to the short-wheelbase question

COMPARATIVELY, the Nash Rambler is not a small car, but rather should be termed a light car, for it can easily seat five people, three in the front and two in the back. Baggage space, however, is somewhat limited

KAISER-FRAZER now shares with Nash the distinction of being the first in the American automotive field to rediscover the light car. Among the advantages of a light car are unusual gas economy and low maintenance costs

GRIFFITH BORGESON

THE HENRY J car has been introduced to the public in almost every major city, with thousands of orders having been taken. Good selling point is that all luggage to side of car can easily fit into the luggage compartment



GRIFFITH BORGESON

FRONT suspension on the Kaiser light car is extremely rugged, consisting of strong 'A' frames, large coil springs, tubular shocks.

addition to the U.S. automotive market since the war's end. Before going any further, let's make it clear that there is absolutely no connection between the Nash NXI and the Rambler. The NXI was a single isolated experiment which may or may not reach the production stage. The Rambler *is* in production, will be available in convertible sedan, station wagon, and hard-top versions.

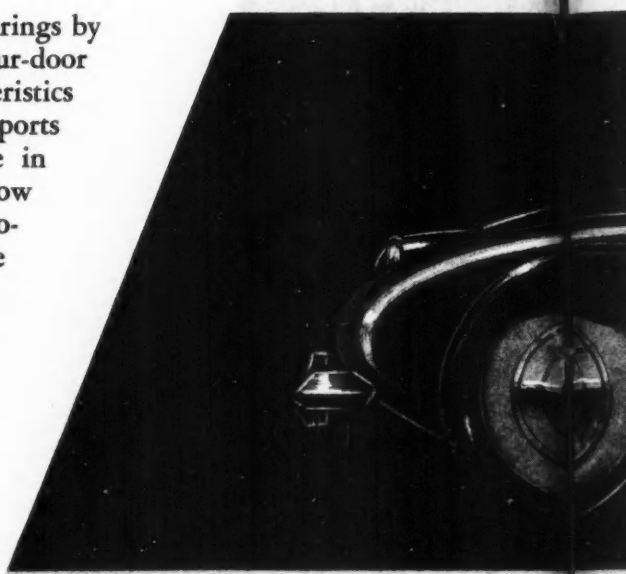
We have seen all three of these, and don't hesitate to say that each is beautiful, elegant, and practical. The Rambler convertible will undersell all other convertible competition, its makers claim. However, the idea behind this line has been to produce what is truly a scaled-down luxury car stock-equipped with every convenience and elegant appointment of full-scale, full-price models. The interiors are very roomy, lavishly upholstered and finished, yet haven't an inch of excess space. The bodies are handsomely executed in the pontoon tradition and adequate luggage space is provided. The station wagon is sleek and certainly one of the best-looking bodies of its type ever made. Most remarkable of all in this case, too, is the fact that, in spite of a short wheelbase, there seems to have been very little sacrifice of space. On the contrary, the design-conscious critic is most apt to feel that here, at last, automotive design is becoming rational, and that utility and good taste are beginning to prevail against ostentation and sheer mass. We'll not get lost in the maze of excellent details incorporated in the Rambler bodies, but will content ourselves with the final remark that a great deal of high-grade engineering thought has obviously gone into their design. *(See June 1950* MOTOR TREND *for additional details and road test.—Editor)*

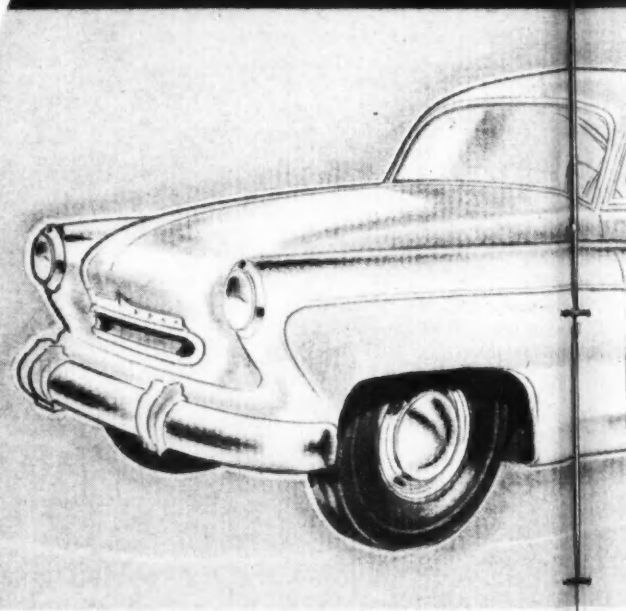
There has certainly been a crying need in this country for a home-produced, high-quality, short-wheelbase car, like the two described above. Two-and-a-half million families own two cars each, and few of them have any need for two land yachts. Added to this group there is the vast horde of unmarried car owners who rarely need to carry more than one or two extra passengers. Then there are tens of thousands of drivers whose work keeps them on the highways—alone. They, too, can use a powerful, practical light car. The advantages of the light car, in addition to the obvious economy, are far too many to list, but one advantage having universal meaning these days is that of superior maneuverability in traffic, and easier parking. The question of safety has been the big worry in the minds of many potential buyers, and Nash and K-F have done their best to make their light cars the equal of heavier models, which, in spite of their weight, are not always designed for maximum safety. Putting all these factors together, keeping in mind the fact that many Americans are rebelling against the recent overstuffed styles, it seems safe to predict a sound future for the short-wheelbase car.

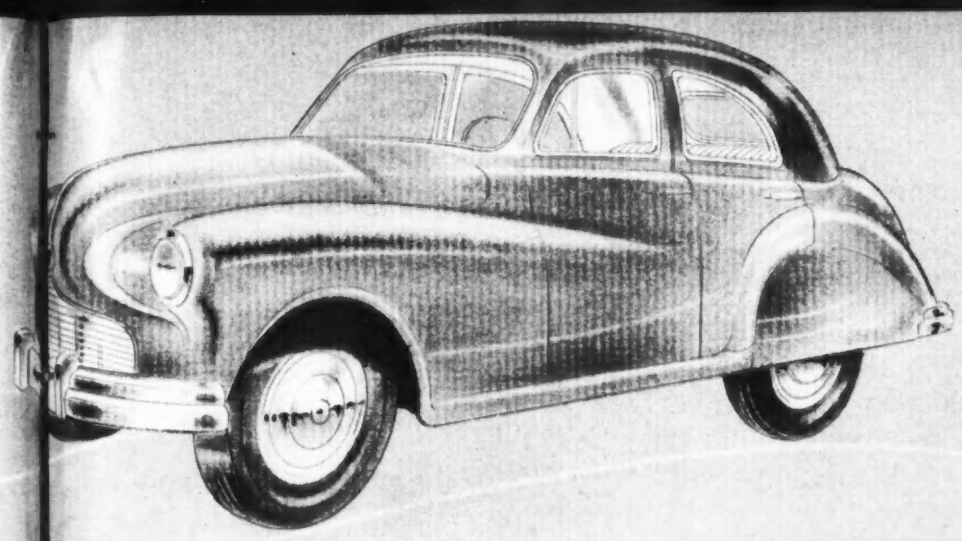
Name	Lbs/Bhp	Cyls.	Disp.	Bhp	Top Speed	Wheelbase	Trans. Spds.	Fuel Cons.	Curb Wt.	Price
Nash Rambler	30.5	6	172.6	82	83	100	3	26	2500	$1808
K-F Henry J	——	4	134.2	72	—	100	3	35	——	——
K-F Henry J	——	6	161.0	75	—	100	3	30	——	——
Austin A-90	31.8	4	162.2	88	83	96	4	30	2828	$1800
Simca 8	49.5	4	74.5	40	65	106	4	27	1980	$1750
Willys 1942	35.9	4	134.0	63	75	104	3	22	2261	$742
Ford 1950	31.0	6	226.0	95	90	114	3	20.	2950	$1707

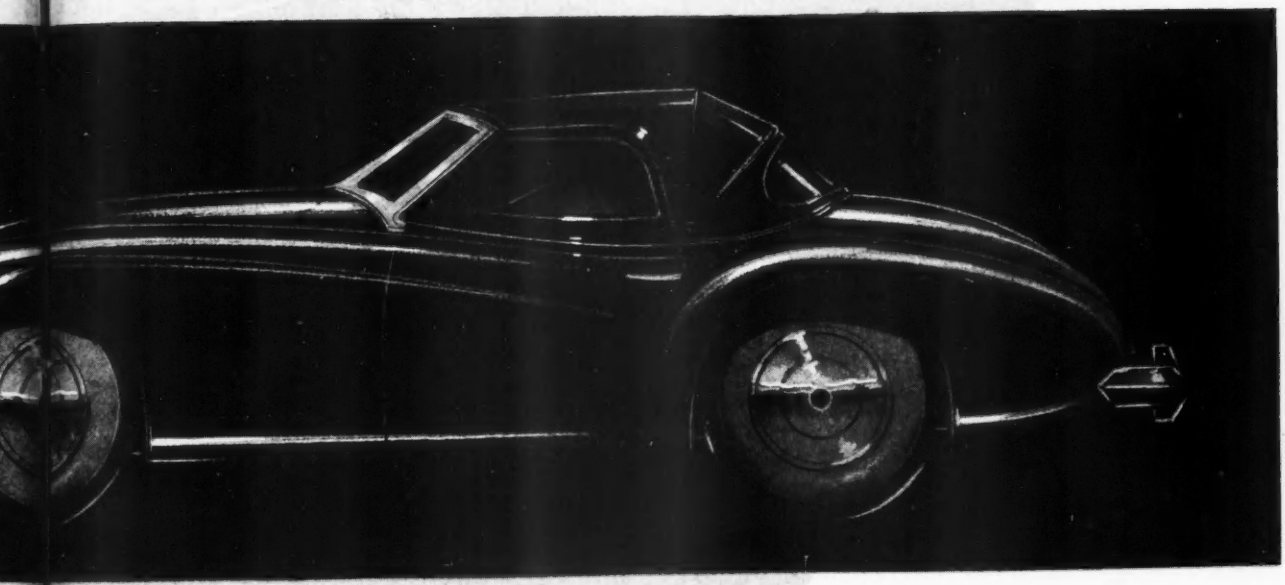
LIGHT CARS... of the future

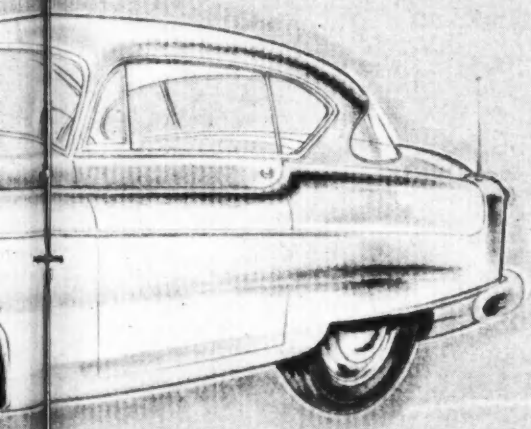
Three types of light cars are illustrated in these renderings by Colonel Alexis de Sakhnoffsky. The top car is a four-door sedan of short wheelbase, resembling in design characteristics the Austin, Jowett, and Standard. The center car is a sports model with soft top, showing the Italian influence in its long, low hood, uncovered rear wheel, thin window posts and fairly flat top. This type of light car, for economical reasons, would not be a true sports car. The third drawing shows a two-door sedan of the Kaiser-Nash type, being designed for esthetic, as well as practical, qualities. These cars need not necessarily be limited to the design or drafting board. If the steps taken by Nash and Kaiser are any indication, other manufacturers will probably be doing more than just thinking about the light car — it will undoubtedly become increasingly important to their business longevity.



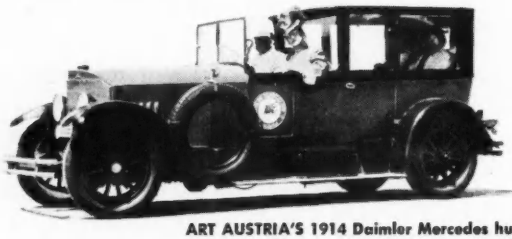




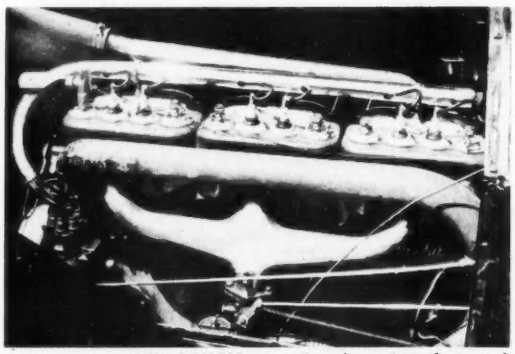




LEFT—Twenty-eight different makes of antique vehicles, dating from '05 to '15, were exhibited to the San Francisco public for two days



ART AUSTRIA'S 1914 Daimler Mercedes hummed from the City of the Angels to the Golden Gate without a miss, carrying four passengers



FOR AGELESS operation, keep 'em clean and keep 'em tight. This is an under-the-hood view of Earl Farnsworth's 1914 Olds touring car

CARAVAN OF CARRIAGES

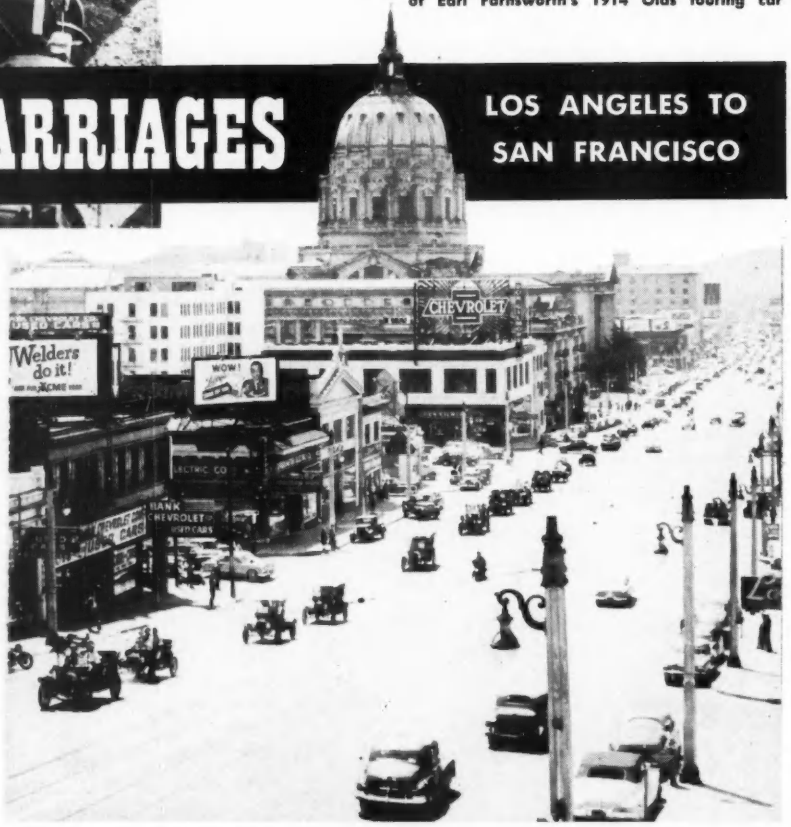
LOS ANGELES TO SAN FRANCISCO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRIFFITH BORGESON

THE LONGEST antique car tour ever attempted in the U. S.—the Third Annual Caravan of the Horseless Carriage Club of America—was carried off with total success this April. The "circuit" was Los Angeles to San Francisco and return and, with side trips, added up to more than 1000 miles of exciting motoring.

No cars newer than 1915 were eligible for the colorful trek and of the thirty-four cars which started, with the intention of pushing on to the Golden Gate, thirty-two breezed through to the goal. The owners of these thirty-five-year-old—and older—gas buggies can be justly proud of the fine work they have done in not only restoring the showy side of their pets, but for keeping them in tip-top mechanical shape as well.

Wherever these spotless old cars are seen they inspire mixed amusement and awe in the young and bring back fond memories to the old. It's no wonder then that heavy, enthusiastic crowds turned out as part of the Past paraded through each town on the route on the long haul north. Members of the caravan were the first to praise the perfect management of the entire tour by its sponsor, General Petroleum.

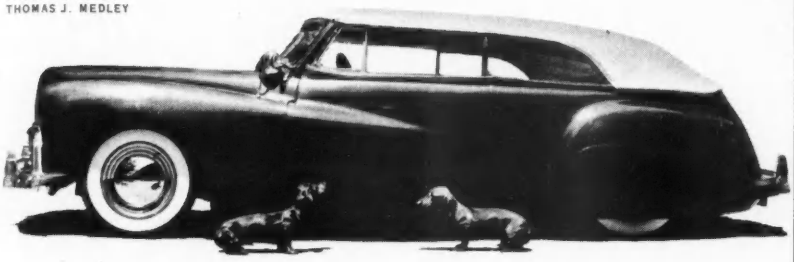


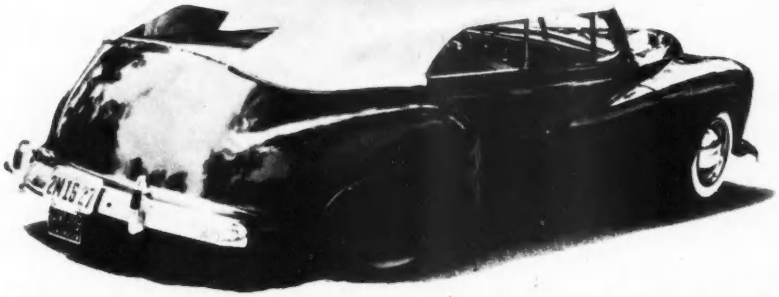
AFTER parading up Market Street and now with the San Francisco City Hall in the background, fifty horseless carriages made a triumphal march up the bay city's Automobile Row

FLAT FORD Custom

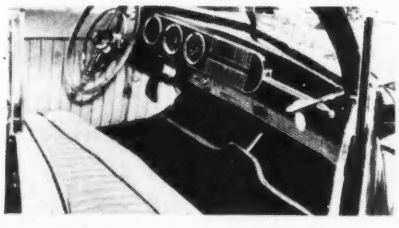
"ONE OF the clan?" one Dachshund seems to be asking of the other. Although low enough to be (49 inches from top to ground), this Barris Kustom job that hugs the ground was originally a 1941 Ford two-door sedan. The car belongs to Joe Urritta of Fresno, Calif., restyled by Sam Barris for about $3600

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
THOMAS J. MEDLEY





THE FRONTAL view shows the lengthened and chopped hood that projects only two inches above the raised fenders. The grille was made out of chopped 1947 Oldsmobile bars, while the bumpers are from a 1948 Ford. Full vision on sides and rear has been obtained by having a convertible cowl section with one-half chrome framing around all the glass to eliminate the use of side window posts. Also featured are special fadeaway fenders from the front that fade into the door, and special inset molded headlights. The front end has squared-off sections to give it full wheel clearance, and has been lowered by use of a dropped axle and special springs. The body has been channeled, has been sectioned and rolled under with a three-inch curve. The front and rear fenders have both been shifted higher into the body to give it a low body and fender line. It is molded solid from front bumper to rear bumper. The rear panel section has been chopped down about five inches, and has been sealed in solid. It has rolled gravel pans front and rear that are sealed into the body. Special crossmember and springs are used at the rear. Tail lights are made of plastic and are molded into the bumper guards. Interior of this custom car features a dash from a 1948 Studebaker Commander. Doors, hood, and deck are pushbutton-operated. The top and upholstery were done by Marian Cottles of Sacramento, California. It is white antique, lined with elongated green beads. The doors are padded with the same material, while the floorpad is made from a special rug covering. The paint job on this car is different from usual in that it has considerable depth and lasting qualities. The paint is a sympho-chromatic type, made by A & H Paint Company, and is dark, iridescent green in color



Almquist

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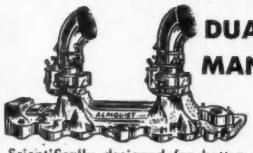
"Famous for Winning Performance . . ."



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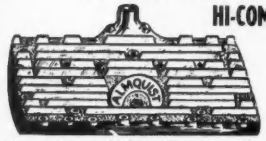
$29.75 exchange ($38.50 new)
Super Track "Hi-Torque" V-8 Cams
$40.00 exchange ($48.50 new)
(All other cars $25 to $45)

HI-COMPRESSION HEADS



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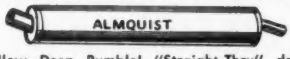

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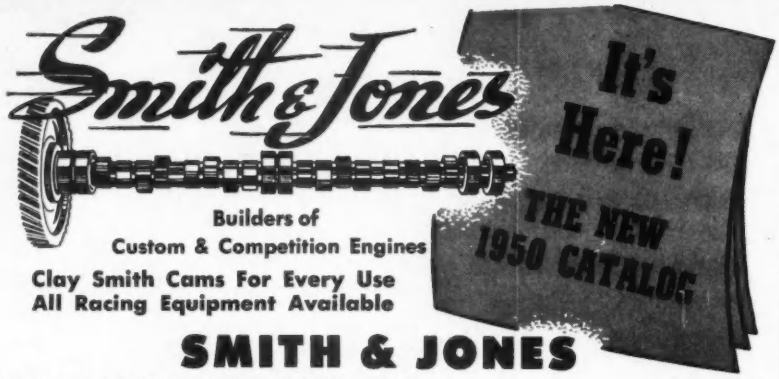

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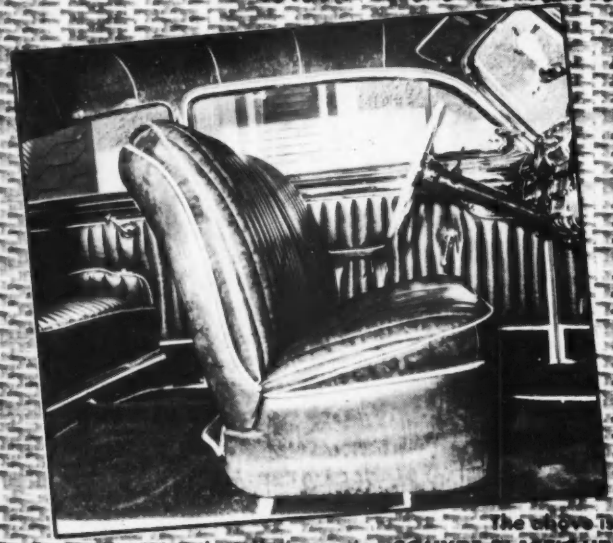

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Polaroid *vs.* Sealed Beam

(Continued from page fourteen)

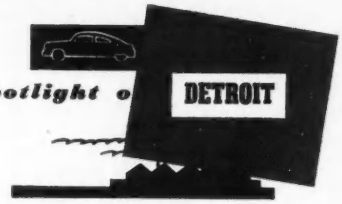
car B is that his own viewer will remove the glare from car A's headlights. His biggest disadvantage is that his viewer will also reduce visibility received from his own headlights approximately 63 per cent. From this illustration the conclusion is that certain uncomplimentary traffic lighting conditions must be endured by the public until a period of transition proceeds to completion.

As has been mentioned before, the public has met the present lighting transition of presealed beam to sealed beam comparatively well. Both Dr. Edwin H. Land, President and Director of Research of the Polaroid Corporation, and Mr. Val J. Roper, Illuminating Engineer of the General Electric Company, have expressed the opinion that relatively few more problems will present themselves with the introduction of this more advanced lighting system.

One important question is that of state legislation adopting the use of two separate lighting systems upon their highways. This issue gains its importance through the necessity of maintaining uninterrupted interstate commerce traffic. It is feared that certain disgruntled persons will become annoyed with the new system during the early stage of introduction and bring pressure to bear upon State authorities to discontinue its use. This, of course, would defeat such a program in its major premise. It becomes evident that authorities must provide for its continued use once it has been accepted.

In a Polaroid system certain equipment is necessary, at least in the opening phase of transition. These are a pair of 125 watt Polaroid headlamps, together with a pair of 60 watt city lamps, with adjustments comparable to sealed beam units, to be used when encountering heavy traffic conditions. Also a Polaroid viewer, which is a plastic polarizer, mounted in a position in front of the driver and that is adjustable for use when encountering various circumstances. Since there is an increase in electrical consumption there must also be an increase in generator capacity to energize the 125 watt Polaroid lamps. Heavier wiring, in addition to at least two more small relays, is also necessary. All in all, the retail cost in the beginning to new automobile owners might fall somewhere between $30 and $80, according to industry guesses. At present they are comparing the purchase price of safer road visibility with that of a good car heater or radio. In general, the cost of equipping new and old cars with a Polaroid system is still an open question.

In the past few months several articles have appeared in newspapers and periodicals announcing the seriousness involved in night driving. Only recently the Automobile Club of Southern California declared that headlight glare was Highway Public Enemy No. 1. They have pointed out the fact that almost one-half of the automobile accidents reported in the State of California last year occurred after dark. This is extremely important when taking into consideration that there are considerably fewer cars on the road at night than during the day. With the introduction of automobiles on the highways equipped with a unique polarized lighting system, the possibility of reducing the figures representing night driving accidents becomes immediately apparent. An increased necessity for better road visibility and a glare-free headlighting system is clear and lies at the option of the automobile owner.



AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSIONS continue to be high in the public's interest. The latest company to adapt it is Studebaker, who have named it, very simply, "Studebaker Automatic Drive." Inner workings of this transmission consist basically of a single-stage, three-element torque converter made of stampings, two epicyclic gear sets, two oil pumps, one multiple-disc clutch, and a single-plate, oil-submerged clutch for direct drive. Transmission will be offered on Commodore models for present, on Champion's soon. . . . It is definitely known now that Chrysler is tooling up for a fully-automatic transmission. No word is available on details, except that it will be torque converter type. . . . Unusual wrinkle in manufacture of Packard Ultramatic Drive is use of finely-ground walnut shells, used as "shot" to blast tiny metallic burrs off machined surfaces of castings. Incidentally, public seems to be accepting automatic drives—since first of year, over 82 per cent of all new Packards were equipped with Ultramatic. . . . The trend in automatic transmissions is toward torque converters, with special emphasis on simplified control mechanisms. To overcome the basic disadvantage of all automatic drives—lesser fuel economy—engineers are now designing types that "lock out" the torque converter in direct drive. The converter is used for acceleration and pulling, but rests at cruising speeds where mechanical gears can operate more efficiently.

NEW LIGHT CAR: Newest company to throw its hat into the light car ring is Willys-Overland, which will introduce a light car in 1951. It will be a five-passenger, two-door sedan of around 100-inch wheelbase. Styling will be somewhat Continentalish.

ENGINE DEVELOPMENTS: Latest word on overhead valve V-8's is that Chrysler will probably be using them on their 1951 models, unless the recent strike has thrown them too far off schedule. . . . First American motor vehicle to use a gas turbine is a Kenworth Motor Truck Corp. truck. Turbine is Boeing's (see MOTOR TREND, May 1950).

SIGNS OF OUR TIMES: The New York state legislature has passed a law that requires all motor vehicles manufactured for use in that state to have electrical directional signals installed by 1952. More states will probably follow, to make this a must installation for Detroit. . . . Ford Motor Co. is now doing more business with local and state police, since they supply cars with "highway control" V-8 engines of 110 hp, displacement of 255.4 cu. in. (bore and stroke of $3\frac{3}{16}$x4 ins.). . . . There is more behind the chromed "vents" in the rear fenders of new Cadillacs than meets the eye. Watch for a slow (over a period of a few years) educational movement by manufacturers to have the public accept a rear-engine car.

PSEUDO-CONVERTIBLES seem to be the popular body style now, what with all the General Motors Companies having one (Cadillac Coupe de Ville, Buick Riviera, Oldsmobile Holiday Coupe, Pontiac Catalina, Chevrolet Bel Air), and not being able to supply the demand. This type of styling will probably be seen more frequently, as it is now even simulated in the 1950 Buicks and 1950 Cadillac 61s.

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TRANSATLANTIC NEWSLETTER

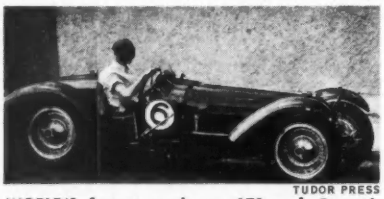
by A. Devereux

THE CARS in this pleasant Alpine setting are both engineered by Dr. Ferdinand Porsche: rt., German Volkswagen; left, Austrian Porsche

ITALY: Alfa-Romeo is as unchanging in its basic conceptions as tradition-loving Rolls-Royce, although its experimental department stands second to none. Alfa's 1951 passenger car production will retain the classic S and SS types: six-cyl., 2500 cc, one- and three-carburetor engines respectively. Added: a lighter passenger car which will feature an engine largely made up of light alloys, with double ohc, 7.4:1 c.r., 80 bhp at 5000 rpm . . . Nardi and Co., familiar to you who read the ads, is now building a small car with 75-inch wheelbase, their usual excellent chrome-moly tube frame. Power plant is a 750 cc (45.8 cu. in.) BMW flat twin, gives top of 80 mph. This firm also makes dual intake manifolds for Fiat 500 and 1100 models . . . For the same cars, a practical fan belt-driven water pump is available, can be installed in 15 minutes, will add to the life of the engine . . . Philatelic readers should know that Italian government has issued a handsome "car" stamp to commemorate the Turin Auto Show, one of the big international events of the year . . . Emilio Isotta, son of I. F.'s founder, Cesare, is now a practicing architect, writes articles on motor racing for the Italian press.

FRANCE: In 1930 Alexis de Sakhnoffsky set Paris afire with an article titled "The Car of the Future" in the coachbuilders' bible, "*l'Equipement Automobile.*" His predictions proved true in 20 years of practice, and we see he has set his sight on the same target—the future—via the same authoritative publication . . . Simca-Gordini successes are leading to expansion of the stables. In addition to the already famous 1000 and 1500 cc (61 and 91.5 cu. in.) Fiat-based racing cars, a 2000 cc (122 cu. in.) eight for Formula 2 and a highly advanced unblown 4500 cc (274.5 cu. in.) for Formula 1 are being developed . . . The swing to Cadillac in sport (see that heading) was anticipated by Parisian coachbuilder Saoutchik, who has already designed a series of arresting garments for Cad chassis (photo).

SWITZERLAND: Now in production—the Este, a 500 cc racer, using a sleeved-down U. S. Crosley engine . . . The Geneva Auto Show, one of the world's best from every standpoint, including atmosphere—spring-

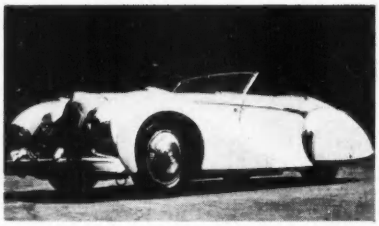


TUDOR PRESS

WORLD'S fastest road car: 170 mph Bugatti. The light-weight wheels have a typically unique Bugatti touch—spokes made of piano wire

time in the Alps, azure lake, snow-capped peaks—exhibited 70 makes, 20 from U. S. We make a big play for this sound economic market, outsell other countries by a slender margin. Chief beef with U. S. cars: hard to handle on mountain roads. Seen here for the first time were the new Alvis three-litre (183 cu. in.) and the Fiat 1400, next issue's Car of the Month. GM and Ford were most on-the-ball U. S. exhibitors.

ENGLAND: One-of-a-kind cars now up for sale here: Said to be world's fastest road car, a perfect, late-model Bugatti type 59 and peak of the marque's achievement—good for 170 mph in racing trim or 150 with all the hardware and two passengers. Also: Sir Malcolm Campbell's modified SSK Mercedes, good for 137 mph. Both cars are as new, hardly driven . . . The two-cycle engine is slowly finding a place here—now there's the Lloyd car which runs a two-stroke, two-cyl., 654 cc (39.9 cu. in.) mill, features four-wheel independent suspension and front-wheel drive, with sporty two/four seat open body . . . Can you believe it? In this fog-ridden country, white lines on highways are unknown! . . . U. S. and Canada are now being toured by an Armstrong-Siddeley representative in one of his company's dazzling cars, powered by an A-S two-cyl. air-cooled diesel. We used to expect conservatism from the English! . . . Vauxhall's production was increased 13 per cent last year over the previous period, number of workers remaining same. Progressive administration includes profit sharing—since '35 over £1,000,000 have been distributed among 11,000-odd employes . . . If you drive a Morris Minor, Shorrock has a vane-type supercharger made just for your car . . . Marshall-Nordec have positive-displacement blowers in stock for most makes, including Ford, Allard, MG, Morris . . . Beautifully engineered *hand* controls for all popular makes of cars have been placed on the market by manufacturers here for the benefit of those not having use of their legs. U. S. agents are sought.



SAOUTCHIK of Paris meets Cadillac of Detroit in a blaze of chrome and a swirl of curves

ISRAEL: If a struggling country ever needed an industrial foundation, it's this one. Good to see that the Kaiser assembly plant at Haifa will be in operation in August, under direction of Robert Rice, who knows overseas methods from having run Kaiser's Belgian operation. Ford International also planning an Israeli plant.

SPORT: What are the International Formulas? F-1: 1½ litres blown, 4½ unblown; F-2: 500 cc b., 2 litres u.b.; F-3: 500 cc u.b. . . . The latter Formula, now in its first year, is off to a flying start with this year's official FIA calendar listing 24 events to be held in seven countries . . . Dauntless Goldie Gardner, holder of 500 cc speed record, using three cyls. of an MG six, is about to take a shot at the 350 cc (21.4 cu. in.) mark, using two cyls. of the same engine, Shorrock blown . . . Alfa-Romeo's re-entry into G.P. racing has been formally announced. Team will be headed by Fangio, backed by Farina and Sanessi . . . The Marseilles G.P. turned out to be a Ferrari walk-away with Villoresi, Ascari, and Fangio placing in that order,

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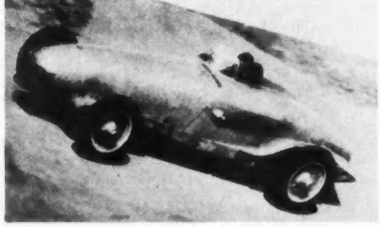
START of the 500 cc race at Goodwood, England, on Easter Sunday. Winner of this event was R. M. Dryden (Cooper-Norton), average of 68.4 mph, followed by S. A. Coldham (J.A.P.-Cooper)

battling the whole thing out with only feet between them all the way . . . Fangio, the Argentine sensation, also spun home victor in the Pau G. P. on a Maserati . . . The 24th Targa Florio was run in rotten weather, in conjunction with the Tour of Sicily. Biggest name driving: Nuvolari, bronze-skinned, silver-haired, well over sixty, at the wheel of an Abarth 1100 cc. Tazio piled up early in the event, was unhurt. S. Allard was there, running a Cad engine in one of his J-2's, which ruptured its fuel tank and went up in flames just as Mister Sidney bailed out. Biondetti drove a Jag XK-120, Ascari a 2400 cc (146.4 cu. in.) Ferrari, and these fine combinations of man and machine also dropped out due to mechanical problems and the rigors of the course—a thoroughly shattering race for all concerned. Winners were, in the Main Class: Bornigia, 2500 cc Alfa; Sports Class: Apruzzi, 750 cc Fiat . . . Raymond Mays and Peter Walker have been nominated official drivers for BRM team. As additional cars are readied, more drivers will be announced, these to be drawn from the youthful element . . . Filthy weather blighted the Easter races at Goodwood, England, which includes the Richmond Cup. In spite of high wind and downpours the stands were packed and Reg Parnell roared through the slush to bring his Maserati home first at an average of 78 mph . . . A Jowett Javelin won the Rally of the Snows, another chassis-killer which chooses the Alps as its proving ground . . . The American, Briggs Cunningham, has two entries in the coming Le Mans race. S. Allard will be there, too, and all three cars will be running Cadillac mills.

BOOK OF THE MONTH: "A Record of Motor Racing, 1894 to 1908" has been added to the already great repertoire of Motor Racing Publications, Ltd. This is an amazing and unique piece of work—written in 1909, it was promptly ignored, only to be discovered and recognized as a classic when only a few copies still existed. The factual data are completely thorough and a good narrative makes it live. This large, faithful reprint of the illustrated original is cheap at $6.

CAR OF THE MONTH: Porsche 356. The newest creation of one of history's most brilliant designers of sports and racing cars (need we utter the names Mercedes and Auto Union?) seems to combine all the lessons learned from the past with future-probing insight. Beneath the rear deck of the super-aerodynamic body lies a flat four engine of 1131 cc (69 cu. in.) disp., with a bore well in excess of stroke: 75 x 64 mm. Oh valves and two down-draft carburetors are used, engine is forced-draft air-cooled, and the power-to-weight ratio is equal to that of the MG Midget. Alpine efficiency is aided by a four-speed box, low center of gravity, 83-inch wb and broad track, plus the many-times-proved Porsche independent front and rear suspension. This little Austrian jewel leaps along at 88 mph, gives over 33 mpg—a challenge to all designers.



HERE IS the M.A.P. diesel-equipped racing car that recently captured 15 world's records, seen at Montlhery, with Fernand Lacour at the wheel

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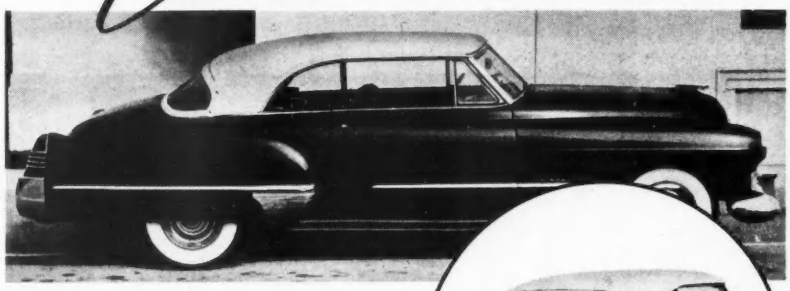

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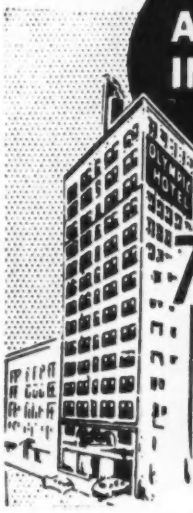

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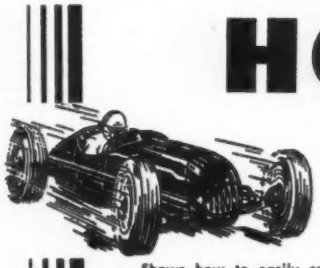

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(Continued from page nine)

by eliminating the usual wind resistance caused by standard headlight placement.

The 90-degree, V-8 'L' head Lycoming engine is rated as 125 hp at 3500 rpm (175 hp at 4200 rpm for the Supercharged model). Standard compression ratio was 6.5:1, with optional heads available in 1937 at 6.6:1, and also 6.25:1. Fourth speed forward was a semi-overdrive speed at 2.75:1, and third, or high gear was rated at 3.88:1. All gears were helical except reverse which was spur-cut. Aluminum heads and pistons (some were Ray-day pistons, the same as Duesenberg used); babbitt bearings; four counterweights on a three main, dynamically and statically balanced crankshaft; center-mounted camshaft (from the center of which the supercharger was taken off by a bevel gear) with rocker-arm-actuated valves (the combustion chamber is very similar to a Packard Twelve design); no vibration damper was used. Gemmer worm-and-roller steering gear combined with center-point steering linkage produced a 20.25:1 steering ratio, and a turning radius of 20½ feet. Oil pressure, 40 psi maximum, 110 psi at cranking speed for each cylinder's compression rating.

The engine weighs 566 pounds, is full-pressure lubricated, displacement is 288.6 cubic inches, stroke and bore 3½-inch x 3¾-inch, intake manifolds are aluminum, and a double impeller water pump is mounted at the front of the engine.

A tubular rear axle connects the rear wheels, with suspension by semi-elliptic leaf springs. An independent suspension, consisting of a massive box arm and a transverse semi-elliptic leaf spring, is the front assembly, and Delco double-action hydraulic shocks are used all around.

Nine-inch road clearance, sedans 60 inches high, convertibles 58 inches, 56-inch tread forward, 60 inches rear, 6.50x16-inch, 6-ply tires—those are the basic specifications for the 1936-1937 Cords.

There were six body styles made of both the supercharged and unsupercharged cars. They were: a Westchester sedan, a four-passenger Beverly sedan (which had four armchair-type seats), the convertible coupe, the convertible club coupe, another Beverly sedan (on a 132-inch wheelbase) and the Berline on 132-inch wheelbase (the Berline was a partitioned-fore-and-aft chauffeur drivable sedan). These same bodies came supercharged. The prices for the unsupercharged models ranged from $2450 to $3050; the supercharged, $2850 to $3575.

"And that, my scribbling friend," said Franky the Cord, "is the story of my life. Are there any questions?"

"Yes," I said. "Where can one get parts for the Cord now that they are out of business? And also, where can one get inquiries about Cord servicing and repair answered?"

"The answer to both those questions is: At the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Company, Auburn, Indiana, owned by Dallas E. Winslow; Director of Service, H. S. Liddell."

"What happened to the Cord and Auburn Company after 1937?" I asked.

"The corporation was sold to the Aviation Corporation then, although the Cord body dies later turned up on Hupmobiles and Grahams for a year or so, slightly modified to fit the rear-drives of these cars."

"How much should I pay for a used Cord (1936-1937) in fair condition?" I asked.

"No more than you can afford," snapped the Cord, "I've seen my buddies hawked for as much as $2000 and as little as $50. Condition determines price, as with any car."

"Would you explain exactly how the pre-

selector gear shift on the late Cord works?"

"After you tell me exactly what Einstein's theory of Gravitation-Electro-Magnetism is," answered the Cord huffily.

"Oh. Well, then, would you mind telling me how I am to give any source of material for my article? I can't say a Cord told me."

"Just say that you owe everything to: H. S. Liddell; Gordon Wilson; Moss Motors, Ltd.; Ed Brewer; Roy Faulkner; A. A. Voigt; and John J. Weir."

Which is what I'm doing . . .

MG Speed Tuning

(Continued from page fifteen)

A ¾-inch wide washer should be inserted under each of the head nuts with a thickness identical to the amount milled from the head (*i.e.*, ⅛-inch milled, ⅛-inch thick washer). The rocker assembly as well should be raised to conform with the reduced head thickness. This can be done quite easily by making some steel shims to fit under the base of the rocker assembly brackets. These shims should be 1/16-inch thick, with three holes to match the bracket surface.

After the head is milled, the combustion chambers should be polished, having first checked to see if any sharp edges are left in the chamber as a result of the grinding. (Be careful not to change the combustion chamber shape.) If any exist, they should be ground down to blend with the rest of the surface. If the maximum is removed from the head, a sharp edge is sure to occur around the end of the spark plug hole. File or grind this locally until it is a minimum of 1/32-inch thick at the center. Be careful not to file back too far, but only in about a ½-inch area around the plug hole.

An engine that has a compression ratio of 8.6:1 runs well on premium gasoline; higher compression ratio engines should use special fuels. For example, for 9.3:1 engines, a fuel blend of one to three of premium to benzol, or 20-30-50 of premium, benzol and methanol could be used. The first blend will give 65 bph @ 5500 rpm; the second will give 66.6 bhp @ 5500 rpm.

Porting

Grind out and polish the intake manifold to match the inside diameter of the carburetors, or about 1¼ inches. Grind out and polish the ports, being careful not to radically change their shape or interfere with the valve seats. About 1/16-inch may be ground away from each side of the intake port outer separating stud boss, still retaining the streamlined shape. This will result in an oblong port 1 3/16 inches high and 21/32 inch wide.

Grind the exhaust and intake ports to match the exhaust and intake manifolds, so that no sharp corners remain at the points of juncture.

Valves

The standard valves may be used with great success, but to obtain the optimum in bhp output, larger valves, together with stronger springs, should be ordered. The outside diameter of these special valves measures 1 13/32 inches for the intake and 1⅜ inches for the exhaust.

Valve springs of 150 pounds open tension should be used in conjunction with these larger valves. These are inner-outer type springs, similar to the standard equipment.

In fitting oversize valves, it will be necessary to grind away part of the combustion chamber to give the valve head clearance. A 1½-inch side and face cutter should be used

(Continued on page thirty-two)

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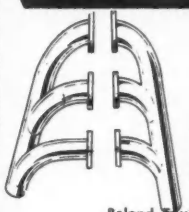

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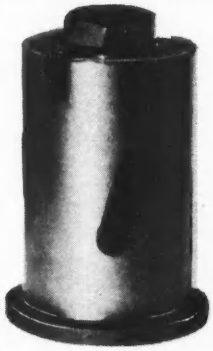

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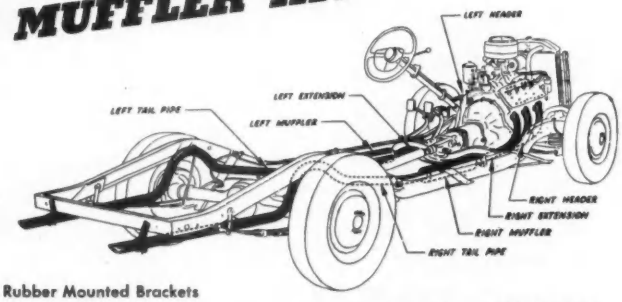

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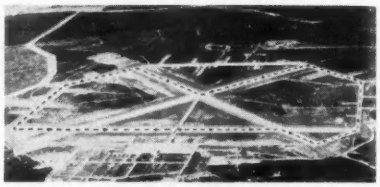


by John Bentley

ANYONE who has the least doubt about the rebirth of sports car racing in the U. S. would have been pretty well sold on this sport after watching the performance of close to 40 cars and drivers at Suffolk County Airport, Long Island, N. Y., on Sunday, May 7th. With no organized big-scale publicity to back it up, the program of races held at the big bomber airfield near Westhampton drew almost 25,000 spectators. It is certain that they will be back to watch the sleek European Alfas, Jaguar XK-120's, the Ferrari, the LeMans Frazer-Nash, the Cadillac-powered Allard, the Cisitalias, the drove of small but gallant MG's (both supercharged and unsupercharged) and all the other sports machines that contributed to the day's fun.

Following on the heels of established road races such as those at Watkin's Glen, Bridgehampton and Palm Beach, the Suffolk County Airport races were something new and exciting and very much akin to Britain's now famous Silverstone airfield circuit, only with wider, longer runways. The "spiked" concrete surface, designed specially to exercise maximum stopping power on rolling airplane wheels, spelled murder for the tires of the speeding cars, but that didn't prevent their drivers from putting up some amazingly good times around the three-mile circuit with its two sharp corners and three sweeping curves. Briggs Cunningham's 12-cylinder, two-litre Ferrari, for instance, turned a lap at 2:80—an average speed of about 80 mph. True, the main straight, 300 feet wide and nearly a mile long, permitted speeds of around 110 mph on each lap, but even so, 80 mph is a fast average, having regard for the reverse curve at the 'V' of the two main runways.

The first half of the program was devoted to qualifying races of five laps (15 miles) each, by classes. The first heat was for cars up to 1450 cc (87 cu. in.). Brete Hannaway, a masterly newcomer handling one of the new TD type MG's in his first race, won by several lengths. The MG had oversized valves and a compression ratio of 8:1, but there were no other modifications. Pauley (Cisitalia) ran second and Ted Dawson (MG) was third. Winner's average: 70.45 mph.

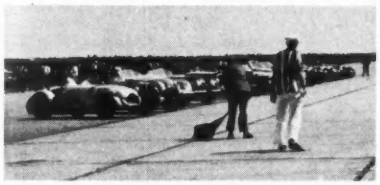
The second race (cars from 87 to 117 cu. in.) drew eight cars. In this one, your reporter, driving a supercharged MG formerly owned by him and borrowed for this occasion, was lucky enough to establish an early lead and hold it until the checkered flag. Peter Iselin (HRG) placed second and Bob Deshon (MG) was third. Winner's average: 71.47 mph.

In event three, engine size came within the limits of 117 to 180 cu. in. The finish was something to behold as Cunningham (Ferrari) and Kulok (Frazer-Nash) raced almost neck and neck at over 100 mph towards the checkered flag with the Ferrari winning only by the length of its hood. Winner's average: 72 mph.

The fourth race (for 180 cu. in. and over) was notable for some stylish cornering by

Tom Cole's Cadillac-engined J-type Allard and Bruce Stevenson's Mercury-powered V-8 Special. The three absolutely stock Jaguar XK-120's of Irving Goldschmidt, Bob Reider and Bill Spear also turned in smooth, impressive runs that conveyed a suggestion of running well within their power. Stevenson (V-8) held second and Goldschmidt (XK-120) was third. Winner's average: 77.9 mph.

The Heart Trophy Race of 100 miles brought together 22 cars lined up diagonally at one side of the wide runway for a LeMans type start. As the flag dropped, drivers ran



50 feet to their cars, jumped in, fastened their safety belts and were off. Alex Ulmann's green Alfa was first away, but Cole's superior acceleration and his pole position nullified this advantage and again he took the lead to hold it for 27 of the 30 laps. Kulok, overeager, stalled his Frazer-Nash and was last away but drove like the wind and picked up 11 places in two laps, getting back among the leaders. Goldschmidt (XK) ran second and Bruce Stevenson (V-8) was third. Cunningham (Ferrari) stayed in fourth position until the fifth lap when he put on an easy spurt and went by Stevenson. There he remained, making no serious effort to move up until the 13th lap when he overtook Goldschmidt on the main straight and went in pursuit of the fleeing Cole. From then until the 27th lap, nothing much happened and the first three—Cole, Cunningham and Goldschmidt—kept their positions, but Kulok (Frazer-Nash) was tagging Goldschmidt with relentless persistence and the running battle between these two kept the onlookers with their necks craned for lap after lap. Finally, on the 27th lap as the cars raced by on the mile straight, Cunningham, in

THE FERRARI, driven by Briggs Cunningham to victory in the 100-mile Heart Trophy Race

response to a pit signal, suddenly stepped on the gas hard and overtook Cole's Allard to assume the lead. Simultaneously, Kulok made an all-out bid to displace Goldschmidt from third spot. He drew level and actually pulled ahead as the two cars belted towards the treacherous corner at the far end of the straight, both moving at better than 110 mph. The crowd got to its feet wondering which would back off first—the XK or the Frazer-Nash. By sheer, dogged determination, Goldschmidt won out and got his big car through the corner first. From then on, though Kulok challenged again during the last three laps, he didn't have enough to make it and the stock Jaguar, pulled off its daily run in the streets of New York, finished third. Winner's average: 76.93 mph. Cole, who finished with a fractured wheel that might not have lasted another lap, was only .03 mph slower, while Goldschmidt averaged 75.77 mph and Kulok, in fourth, pretty much the same.

From a critical observer's standpoint the pitwork was poor, while some of the drivers handicapped themselves on corners and burned rubber needlessly by shifting down

(Continued on page thirty-two)

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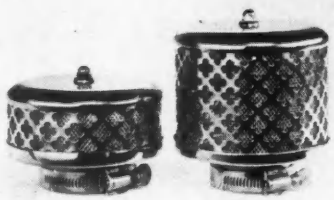

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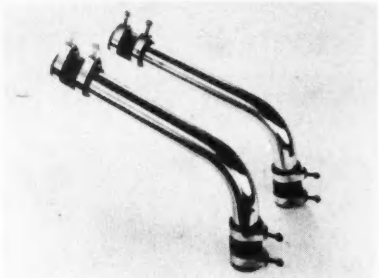

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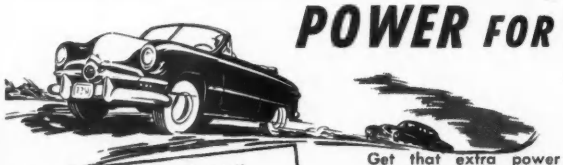

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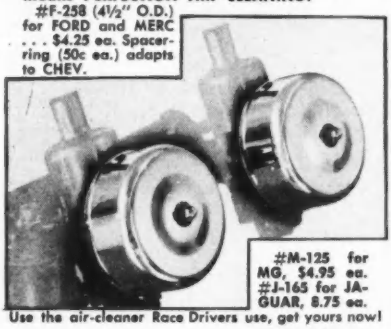

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FROM right to left are: Sir William Rootes, K.B.E., head of Rootes Group, Peter Satori, west coast foreign car distributor, and H. Henkel, W.C. regional manager of Rootes Motors

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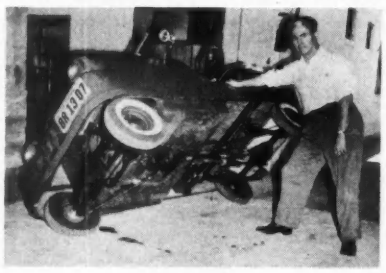

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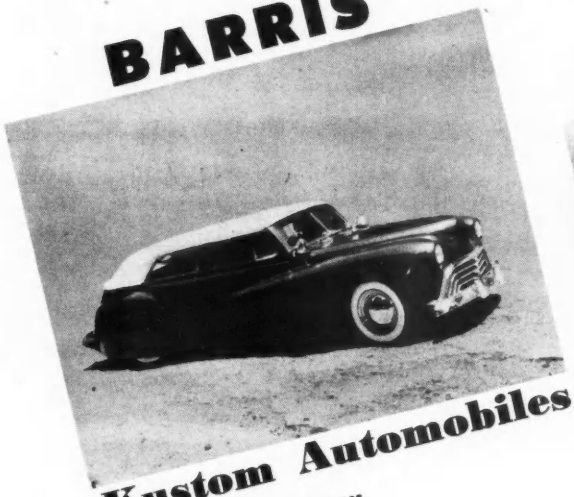

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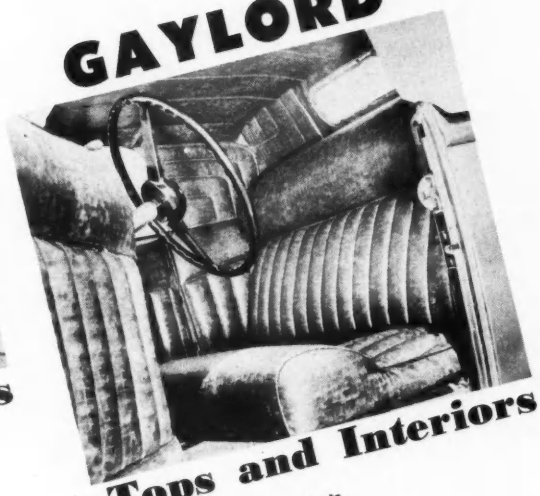

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MG Speed Tuning

(Continued from page twenty-seven)

for this purpose in the area adjacent to the intake valve, and 1 13/32-inch tool for the exhaust. These cutters should be piloted off the valve guides. The valve choke must be bored out in a similar way; 1 19/64 inches for intake, and 1 9/64 inches for exhaust.

The valve seats, as well, will have to be recut on a 30-degree angle, with top diameters of 1⅜ inches for intake and 1 5/16 inches for the exhaust.

Ignition

In the progressive phases of tuning it will be noticed that the standard spark plug is no longer satisfactory. When this situation arises, it may be necessary to change to colder plugs, these being in order: Champion L 11-S, LA-11, LA-14, and LA-15.

The standard coil and distributor may be used with great success, unless the ultimate is desired, in which case a magneto should be installed in place of the distributor. There are several types of magneto (Scintilla-Vertex, Lucas, etc.) which can be adapted. In some cases a driving coupling will have to be fabricated, and usually the valve side-plate will have to be indented to clear the body of the magneto.

Carburetion

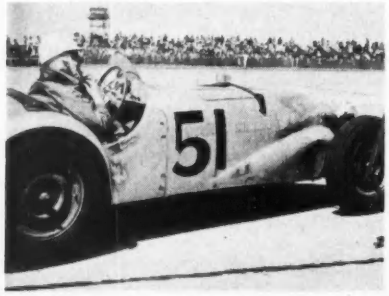
The S. U. carburetors fitted as standard on the MG are truly precision units. They are the result of years of research in this field, and should by all means be used in the tuned engine. The only variance to this is in the fitting of a set of special 1½-inch competition carburetors. If the standard carburetors are used, it is only a matter of changing jets and needles to conform with the type of fuel used. In the case of an engine tuned nearly to the maximum, it may be necessary to install another fuel pump, with separate lines from the tank, and to each carburetor.

Airport Racing at Suffolk

(Continued from page twenty-nine)

either too soon or too late and by overworking their brakes. But on the whole it was a very impressive performance. The AAA officials, under the supervision of Rocky Neereamer, did a fine job. Added color was lent to the proceedings by the Austin A90 pace car with those famous record-breakers, Lt. Col. "Goldie" Gardner and Alan Hess aboard. Preceding the start of all but the big race, the Austin led the pack of snarling machines around for an abbreviated lap before the starter turned them loose.

Whatever the future of road racing, which at present seems bright enough, airfield racing is here to stay. The drivers like it and the public likes it. And if the tires don't like it, that's just too bad.



TOM COLE, seated in his Cadillac-powered Allard, in which he took second in the 100-miler

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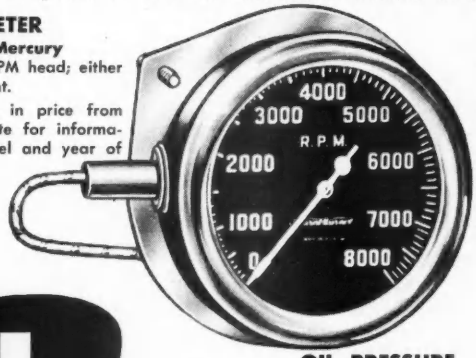

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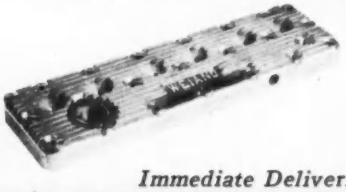

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Letters...

FROM OUR READERS

Letters published in this department are the opinions of the writers and are not to be construed as those of the editors. Address correspondence to: Letters From Our Readers, MOTOR TREND, 1015 So. La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles 35, California.

THE TUCKER, AGAIN

Gentlemen:

It would please me and numerous other MOTOR TREND fans, with whom I have discussed this matter, if you could write an article on the Fabulous (?) Tucker.

I have talked to people who have ridden in them, and even timed them, and they claim Preston Tucker's car was everything he claimed it to be, and then some. Some of these people lived near the Tucker factory.

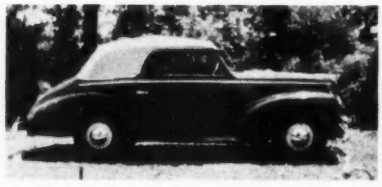
If MOTOR TREND could get one of the few Tucker cars and give it an unbiased write-up as you have done for the Jaguar XK-120, Kurtis Sports Car, or the Fabulous Phantom, you would be doing a great service for the American Automotive Public, and perhaps either shelve the Tucker question once and for all or bring a truly great automobile to a deserving and car-hungry America, according to the fate it honestly deserves.

I'm hoping you will accept this letter as a challenge and put forth an honest attempt to find out the facts.

"Tex" Crow
Boulder, Colorado

—Think it's a swell idea. All we need now is a Tucker.—Editor

"PIETRO"



Gentlemen:

I thought you might be interested in a picture of my 1949 ("Pietro") Model 1100 Cabriolet, with a Carrinzzari-Special body, the only body type of its kind in the country.

I think this model Fiat makes an excellent sports car, as well as a nice around-town car. It is easy riding with independent front wheel suspension, luxurious interior, has plenty of speed. The best part about it, is that it doesn't cause too much attention when you are parked, or when you are driving.

Ben H. Watson
Washington, D. C.

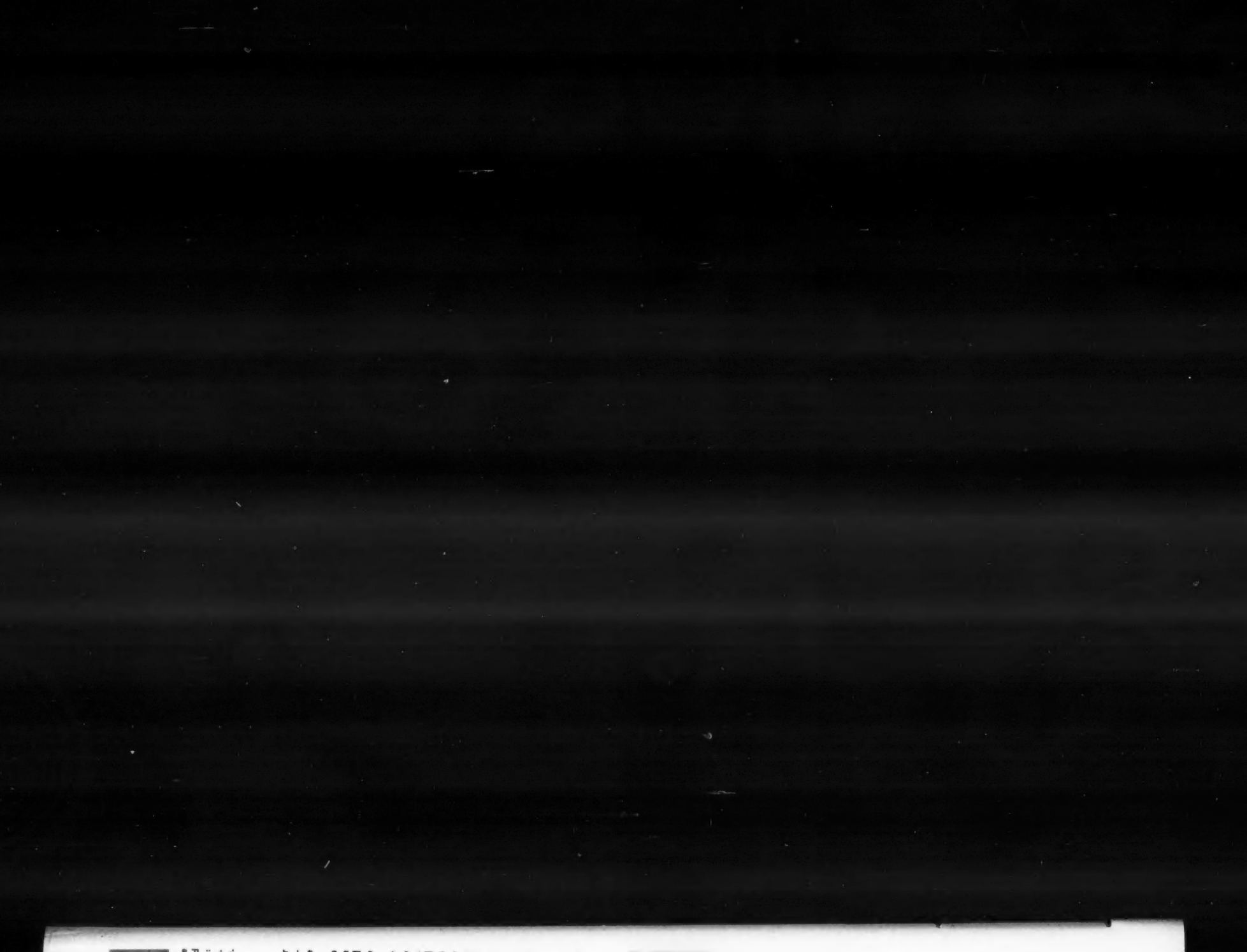
REAR ENTRANCE CADILLACS

Gentlemen:

Herewith, a correction to Tracy Gilpin's observation in Duster Data (MOTOR TREND, May 1950) that there are only three 1903 "rear entrance tonneau" Cadillacs known to be in existence. A picture of a fourth, owned by Bob Tierolff of Beloit, Kansas, can be seen in the lower righthand corner of page 11 of the March 1950 issue of Horseless Carriage Gazette, published by the Horseless Carriage Club of Los Angeles. Now that the count has risen, do any other readers know of a fifth?

Bob Young
Sacramento, Calif.

—Anyone knowing of a fifth, please wrap carefully in excelsior and mail, c/o Editor.—EDITOR



A Clean Sweep

Johnny Parsons, AAA Big Car National Champion, wins 100 Mile National Championship Midget Race at Pomona, California . . . driving the "Eddie Meyer Engineering Special" 1948 championship midget race car.

April 16, 1950

Sterling Edwards, driving the Edwards Sports Car, powered with a Ford V8 60 Eddie Meyer competition engine, wins grueling Palm Springs Road Race. Run in burning heat and without a fan, the Meyer powered car finished more than a lap ahead of the second place winner.

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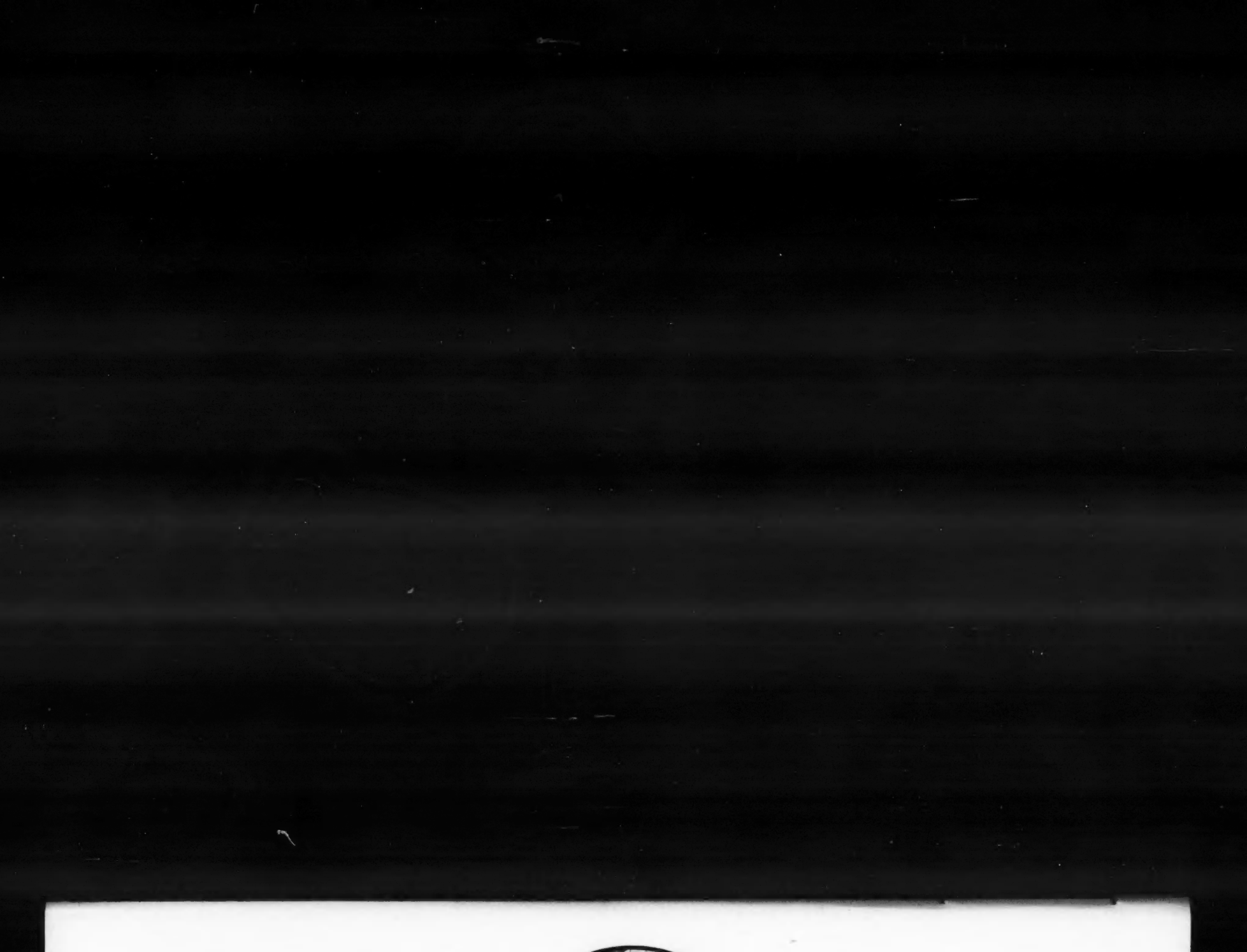
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